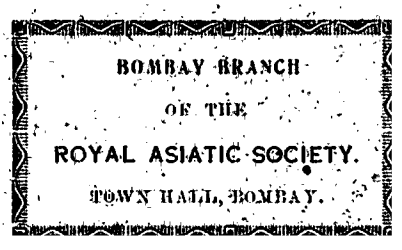

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THE MIRACLE PLAY

OF

HASAN AND HUSAIN,

COLLECTED FROM ORAL TRADITION

BY

66044

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

(VOL. II.)

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—— Body of.
Abd'ush Shums, Ambassador from Europe.
—— Privy Councillor to.
Abraham, Patriarch.
'Alí, husband of Fátimah, the daughter of the Prophet Muhammad.
—— Spirit of.
'Alí Akbar, eldest son of Husain.
—— Spirit or body of.
—— Mother of.
'Ashísh, soldier in the Syrian army.

Bajdat, a thief.
Bashír, a servant of Yazíd.

Caniah, King.
—— Minister of.
Christian Lady.
—— Maid of.

Darwísh, from Kábul.
David, King.

Fátimah, daughter of Husain, and wife of Kásim.
—— (wife of 'Alí) Spirit of.
Futrus, Angel.

Gabriel, Angel.
Ghiyás, Sultán of Hind.

Hasan, son of 'Alí and Fátimah.
—— Spirit of.
Háshim, the Martyr.
Holy Ghost.
Husain, son of 'Alí and Fátimah.
—— Spirit or body of.
—— Head of.
—— Camel-driver of.
—— Nephew of.
Husain's mother, female slave of.

Ibn Sa'd or *'Umar*, Commander of Syrian troops.
Infernal Regions, Keeper of.
Ismá'íl, son of Abraham.

Jacob, Patriarch.
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Jesus.
Joseph, son of Jacob.

Kásim, son of Hasan, and husband of Fátimah.
—— Body of.
—— Mother of.
Khaulí, soldier in Syrian army.
Kulsúm, daughter of 'Alí, and sister of Hasan and Husain.
—— Mother of.

Michael, Angel.
Málik Kázi, brother of Shahrbánú.
—— Wazír of.

Muhammad, the Prophet.
—— Spirit of.

Noah.

Paradise, guardian of.

Rukayyah, daughter of Husain.

Saráfíl, Angel.
Shabis, slave of Ibn Sa'd.
Shahrbánú or *Umm Lailah*, mother of 'Alí Akbar.
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Solomon.
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Sulaimán, Chief of the Khuzá'ah tribe.
—— Prime Minister of.
—— Secretary of.

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'Umar or *Ibn Sa'd*, Commander of Syrian troops.
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Yazíd, Khalíf.
—— Cup-bearer of.
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Zain-ul-'Abid-dín, son of Husain.
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1st Angel.
2nd Angel.
Arab Camel-driver.
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Army of Ibn Sa'd.
Caniah's officer.
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Inhabitants of Madínah.
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Leading Musulman.
—— Wife of.
A lion.
Messenger.
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A mourner's wife.
Scribe.
Sentry.
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Slave of Sultán Ghiyás.
Soldier in Syrian army.
Syrian girl.
Women of the Khuzá'ah tribe.
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SCENE XVIII.

DEATH OF KASIM THE BRIDEGROOM.

THIS Scene depicts the marriage (A.D. 680) of Kásim the son of Hasan with Fátimah the daughter of Husain, and the subsequent death, on the same day, of the bridegroom fighting with the enemy on the plain of Karbalá. "Kaussem, the son of Mahommed, a child of ten years old, came out of the tents with a drawn sword in his hand; whom, on account of his tender years, Hûsseyne desiring to withdraw, the intrepid boy, with a resolution above his age, adjured his uncle, by the truth of the Prophet, to forbear to interrupt him; and being suffered to proceed, he was shortly afterwards assailed by one of the enemy's horsemen, who clove his head through the middle."—Price's "Chronological Retrospect of Mahommedan History," vol. i. p. 405, ed. 1811.

Husain.—Adversity is again knocking at the door of my heart with the hammer of sorrow; the host of grief is inviting souls to the banquet of lamentation. Moses on Mount Sinai is shedding tears at my pitiable condition; and Jesus the son of Mary is groaning loud over my miserable state. The turn of Kásim has arrived, and changed the

mirth of the whole world to grief; yea, the sad tragedy of Kásim has set the two worlds in flames. O Solomon,* leave Bilkís, the Queen of Sheba, and the idea of rejoicing in her society, since my Kásim discourses on mournful subjects with his bride.

Zainab.—The heart-rending words of her brother makes Zainab distressed; she therefore repeatedly beats her own head with her hands. She had two lovely sons, two new-moustached youths, smelling like musk, both of whom she saw cruelly beheaded in this wilderness. And now the lot is cast on Kásim, the spouse, the bridegroom, to suffer martyrdom. Would to God Zainab had not been born of her mother to witness such things!

Umm Lailah, the mother of 'Alí Akbar.—O dear son, how much I wished to have the pleasure of seeing thy wedding; to illuminate the city of Bat-há † on the night of thy marriage; that thy grandmother, the best among women,‡ should attend thy joyful feast, and that the chosen Prophet should bring connubial garments for thee from Paradise. But alas! the grave became at last thy bride-chamber. Oh, what a pity! My eyes, dear child, are getting blind by separation from thee. Alas! alas!

Sukainah.—What else can I do if I yield not voluntarily to death? My back is broken since I have lost my dear brother. I am not alone groaning sadly; in every corner of the camp one can see a girl wandering about and moaning and desolate. When I look out on the field with a sorrowful glance, I behold in every place an elegant body, bright as the moon, immersed in blood.

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* Solomon is supposed by some to have married Bilkís, the Queen of Sheba.

† See note †, p. 182, vol. i. ‡ See note *, p. 42, vol. i.

Umm Lailah.—I am but a weak woman, destitute and without any help; a mother bereaved of a dear son, sighing and lamenting his death. My hands are too feeble to do any work, my body is quite bent and crooked; all this is from the death of a youthful son such as Akbar. Have mercy on my afflicted heart, O God, seeing 'Alí Akbar, my son, has vanished from my sight!

Husain—O poor Zainab, I moan from grief and sorrow; fire cannot indeed be concealed in anyone's bosom. Go thou from me to Umm Lailah, and tell her to leave off lamenting. What has happened has been our fate from the beginning, and none can complain against heaven.

Zainab (*to Umm Lailah*).—The arrow of my sigh has hit the dome of the spheres, while the burden of calamity has turned my back into a bow. O Umm Lailah, Husain, the sultán of religion, saith, "Leave off thy mourning for a time. And how long must Sukainah cry out, 'Alas separation! oh for peace!'"

Umm Lailah.—Demand, O Zainab, in the presence of his majesty, that he will excuse me; for it is known to him that the vernal season of my life is suddenly turned into autumn. Tell him, O helpless king, we are destitute creatures; thou ought to have some compassion for the desolate. Do not forbid us to sigh and lament; fire cannot indeed be concealed in anyone's bosom.

Sukainah.—O dear aunt, please tell my father I must certainly mourn for Akbar. On one hand I am thirsty, on the other hand I am about to be led to Syria; what can a father do in the meantime? Nay, dear father, how how long shall I remain in exile? We ought to be sent back to Bat-há.

Zainab (*retiring to her tent*).—Woe to me! the injustice and cruelty of the spheres! They have deprived the bird of my heart of its nest. Sukainah desires to go to Madínah. Alas, poor thing! alas! she must wail, for it is impossible.

She desires to go to the city of Bat-há, not knowing her destined abode is in Damascus.

Kásim (*to Husain*).—My tears, O uncle, are flowing down my cheeks; the sun of my soul is enveloped in sorrow. O king of men, my sighs throw up fire to heaven through excessive grief of mind! From hearing frequent lamentation and wailing, the bird of my heart is far removed from its nest. Give me permission to go to battle, and suppose Kásim to have been already made a sacrifice for Husain, the king of the whole world.

Husain.—My dear Kásim, the scar of thy sorrow has caused a wound in the heart of the holy angels. How can I have patience and endurance after thy body has rolled in blood? I shall never give thee permission to go to battle, because the death of Akbar has left such a scar on my soul.

Kásim.—May I be a sacrifice for thee, O sorrowful uncle! Behold the miserable state of thine own family! On one hand 'Abid-dín is lying sick, moaning, as it were a bird whose wings are broken; on the other hand is Umm Lailah with tearful eyes, and hair dishevelled like the curls of 'Alí Akbar. Please give me the permission I seek, and do not suffer me to be so sad and melancholy, O uncle. I beg of thee, do not allow me to undergo so much pain on thy account, while I can avoid all by dying for thee.

Husain (*to Kásim*).—O rose of Hasan's culture, thou art a keepsake to me, and how can I suffer autumnal blasts to blow over thee? I shall never permit thee to go to war to be killed, lest in the Day of Judgment I should undergo shame in the presence of thyself and of Hasan thy father. Thou art young; why shouldst thou be weary of thy life, poor thing? Return to thy tent, for thou hast an unhappy old mother.

Kásim.—Dear uncle, I am fatherless! let not the heart of an orphan, therefore, be broken, for it is very delicate and soft. Martyrdom is to me much pleasanter than this

abasement of soul. Yea, death is a thousand times sweeter than the bitter life I live!

Husain.—O orphan, let the anguish of thy destitute condition suffice thee! Enough for thee that thou art fatherless, and therefore feelest miserably distressed. Grieve not, O brightness of my eyes, thy poor uncle's heart; give up this wish of thine at once, O thou who art dear to Husain.

Kásim.—O uncle, none of thy companions have been left to help thee, and I should be delighted to render thee any service in my power. Now, O thirsty-souled * Imám, it is my turn; 'Alí Akbar has already made his offering. Oh, may I be sacrificed for thee! oblige me with the favour of acting towards me as Abraham did towards his son when he gave him up for a sacrifice.

Husain.—O beloved of Husain, thou art the light of Hasan's eye, thou art the young cypress,† nay, the fruitful tree planted by the side of my river. I adjure thee, by Hasan thy honoured father, the king of the righteous, to abandon the thought of asking me permission to go to fight with the infidels.

Kásim.—May I be a sacrifice for thee! I cannot give up the idea at all; I must obey the will of my father. Oh, do not put me to shame before thy illustrious progenitor 'Alí, for Hasan will be ashamed of such a son if I die a natural death, and be not slain for thee!

Husain.—Oh! thou dost aggravate the pain of my broken heart with this thy saying; thou dost remind me suddenly of Hasan's will. Thy father, the green flower of the garden of faith, when on the point of death, desired that at a certain period I must have his Kásim married to my daughter, in order that mirth and mourning should be my fate.

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* See note, p. 14, vol. i.

† See note, p. 10, vol. i.

Kásim.—O dear uncle, make me not lose patience by talking to me of marriage; speak of offering sacrifices, please, and not of nuptial affairs. What room is left for joyous feasts now that 'Alí Akbar is gone from the world? It is preferable to wallow in one's own blood than to marry after such a calamity.

Husain.—Seeing that my brother has requested it, I cannot but obey his order. Thou needst not shed tears from thine eyes. I myself will decorate the marriage-bed for thee.

Kásim.—O uncle, certainly thou art in the place of my father. I am convinced that thou carest for me very much; but as for my marriage-bed, it is laid in the grave already. O uncle, no wedding is necessary for me!

Husain.—Come to me, O Zainab, thou bleeding at heart! Come, for it is now time for Kásim's marriage. Sprinkle water on the fire of my soul with thy tears before Fátimah, my afflicted daughter. Go and congratulate her on her intended marriage with Kásim, and see that the matter be carried out.

Zainab (to Fátimah, the bride).—May I be offered for thee, thou unfortunate maiden! I wish thee happiness and connubial bliss in this plain of Karbalá. Know thou that thy illustrious uncle Hasan, the Imám of the age, has requested thy father, the thirsty-lipped Husain, to marry thee in this plain of trial to thy cousin Kásim (unhappy as he may be at such a time), who on this account is called the bridegroom.

Fátimah, the bride.—Ah me! art thou unaware of what has happened to Akbar, whose body has fallen headless there in the dust. The body of Akbar is in the midst of a stream of blood; it cannot be right to hear nuptial songs and the sound of music. Umm Lailah being in great distress on account of her son's decease, we should bethink us that even the fowls are interdicted from feeding on grain and water. It is not proper, now that Akbar is gone, that friends should set out for trips of pleasure in

the meadows. What joy can we have, seeing he is dead? It cannot be called happiness, but misfortune.

Zainab.—May I be a ransom for thee and thy perfumed locks! May God bring it to pass that I may be a sacrifice for thy beautiful head. It is better for thee now to comply with the imperative request of the Imám of the age, by yielding simple assent to the demand, and then be at rest.

Fátimah, the bride.—Return, dear aunt, with my best compliments to my father, saying, "Thus says Fátimah thy daughter, 'O Imám of the age, I most dutifully yield obedience to thy command, without the least sign of reluctance, it being my father's wish.'"

Zainab (to Husain).—May I be a sacrifice for thee, O chosen from among the illustrious! May the spirit of Zainab be a ransom for thy dear soul! Thus does Fátimah humbly state, with tears in her eyes, "The choice of marriage is in my father's hand."

Husain.—Go, sorrowful sister, with tearful eyes, and inform the whole family of what is about to be done; and tell all of them to come together and decorate a nuptial-bed for my dear Kásim.

The Mother of Kásim.—O spheres! what kind of marriage is this? and what sort of wedding? How can it be lawful at such a time to rejoice? If Kásim, the ill-starred, unfortunate youth, had a father now, everybody would by this time have received an invitation.

Zainab.—O Kásim, why dost thou lament so? Why art thou dull, like the evenings of the mournful?

The Mother of Kásim.—Why is Sukainah not present with us? Why dost thou not inform 'Alí Akbar's mother? Must a poor one, who happens to be fatherless, be despised and insulted by the whole world?

Zainab (to Kulsúm).*—O my sore-hearted and lonely

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* Kulsúm was the sister of Zainab, Hasan, and Husain.

Kulsúm! Umm Lailah is sitting in Sukainah's tent. Come along with me, poor distracted sister; peradventure we may prevail upon them, and bring them to the wedding banquet.

Kulsúm.—I am greatly troubled with grief. O base heavens! the painful separation of Akbar has made me so uneasy. Every now and then there comes a new grief to congratulate me. I have repeatedly been a mark for the arrow of cruelty.

Sukainah (weeping over the corpse of Akbar.)—O dear brother, I did never heartily rejoice in thy wedding banquet! Oh, may I be a ransom for thy adverse fortune and fruitless efforts! How can I see a shroud in lieu of a wedding dress? Oh, what a stony heart must I have! May I be a sacrifice for thy heart, dear brother!

Umm Lailah.—Oh, how often I have watched all the night long till the morning light, nursing thee; waiting anxiously at thy cradle, full of expectation! How many nights have I tended thee, not knowing that thou wast to be slain, when a youth, by the malevolent sword!

Zainab (to Umm Lailah).—O my worthy matron, how long wilt thou have wet eyes? It was thy lot that to-day thou shouldst be without a son. Thou needst not groan so sadly as to burn the heart of the world with thy fervent excitement. Cease troubling thyself, and render a thousand thanks to God that Husain, thy husband, is alive. He intends to-day to cheer up the heart of Hasan's orphan; be thou also kind enough to come to this joyful entertainment, to witness the ceremony.

Umm Lailah.—Thy saying, O Zainab, has overwhelmed my heart with sorrow; it has pained my mind, and filled my eyes with tears! Blood is still flowing from the thirsty throat of Akbar: how can I come to any marriage-feast, O dear sister? The bare idea of matrimony is distressing. How can a woman, whose son has died this very day, attend wedding festivals with propriety?

Zainab.—O Lord, could not I make rivers of blood run

down from my eyes? Why should I not mourn and lament over such a marriage? Well, all of us must, for the sake of his poor troubled mind, try to make Kásim cheerful at this feast.

Umm Lailah.—Come along with me, my dear friends, for I have many complaints against cruel time. Let us ornament a marriage-bed for Akbar! Heaven has, at length, indeed granted me my wish! Oh, I cannot but complain of the inconstant spheres, which make sorrow and joy grow up together!

(*On one hand they bring Kásim's marriage-couch, well decorated, and on the other hand a similar bed, covered with black to signify 'Alí Akbar's misfortune, while Umm Lailah and Sukainah mourn over the slain.*)

Umm Lailah.—My beloved child is, to my great sorrow, headless! Alas! my son, my son! My disappointed youth has fallen there like a wingless bird! Alas, dear ones, alas!

Zainab and Kásim's Mother (*at the marriage-couch*).—After all, I have lived to see thee happy under this blue vault, O my noble son, and had the pleasure of joining the chorus on the day of thy rejoicing.

Umm Lailah.—O my rose-cheeked son, the place of thy execution is become a rose-garden with thy blood. I am sore-hearted, I am restless, I am scarred with grief, my son, my son!

Kásim's Mother with Zainab.—I have hopefully decorated thy marriage-bed at last. I have fortunately laid aside my grief in this world, and am merrily singing for my son.

Husain.—O Lord, be thou witness of the thing which I have done; behold I have performed the promise I once made with Hasan. At such a time, notwithstanding my Akbar is lately killed, I have married Fátimah, my daughter, to Kásim, my nephew. (*Addressing Zainab.*) O my faithful sister, who art my only solace in this land of trial, draw near unto me, thou light of the glory of God's

servant; thou mayest take my Fátimah to the house of the bridegroom.

Zainab (to the Bride).—O dear daughter of my brother, thou spouse of poor sorrowful Kásim. Come, let me make thee ride like the Queen of Sheba, and carry thee to the Solomon of Karbalá.

Fátimah, the bride.—Ah me! rather condolence than nuptials: the dust is the fittest marriage-bed for me. The talk of marriage has withered my soul even to death. Would to God Fátimah had died this very day!

The Mother of Kásim.—The conjunction of the moon and the sun has taken place, call it a blessed time, O men, O friends; say, all of you, "Be it a blessed thing."

The Bride (to the Bridegroom).—March forth from the pavilion, O Kásim, for thy spouse approacheth thee. O cousin of me, the sad-hearted one, peace be on thee, who has not seen any joy in life, peace be on thee!

Kásim (to Fátimah).—O lamp of my dark night, on thee be peace! thou art welcome, my thornless rose. Place thy feet on the tearful eyes of Kásim! My destitute spouse and helpless thing, on thee be peace!

Fátimah and Kásim sing together.—O 'Alí Akbar, where art thou? how thy absence is felt by us! O dear one, thy seat is quite vacant in this delightful abode! O God, let no youth ever suffer disappointment in his projects.

Shimar (to Husain).*—O flower of the rose-garden of creation, I wish thee joy! May the marriage of Kásim be attended with happiness! Such a marriage-feast as has been held by thee to-day, has never been witnessed at any time! I wish thee many happy returns. In short, having congratulated thee on the new connubial tie, I beg thee to send his highness, thy son-in-law, to fight with us in the field.

Husain.—Fate is ever ready to strive with me! it has

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* See note, p. 43, vol. i.

played a hundred tricks in order to entrap me. On one hand it paints the face of the bride with red colours, on the other hand it makes the stature of the bridegroom roll in blood! Since these men do not allow me to go back to Hijáz, would to God they would let me proceed to Europe!

*Ibn Sa'd.**—O poor, sad-hearted, tear-shedding Kásim, how pleasantly and comfortably art thou seated in thy bride-chamber! Thou hast nicely lain down on thy nuptial bed; thou hast very beautifully dyed thy hands and feet with henna.† I do not know with what charms thy bride doth ensnare thee, that thou dost not bestir thyself. I congratulate thee on this happy day, which, bethink we, thou wouldest like to continue till the Day of Judgment. Arise, young man, set thy face towards the field of battle. A young bride or spouse ill-becomes thee on such a day.

Kásim.—There is none in this land of trial to help the family of the Prophet of God, or protect them. I will arise, therefore, and, proceeding to the field of battle, give my life as an offering and sacrifice for the sake of Husain.

Fátimah (to Kásim).—Oh, where art thou going, thou pearl of the shell of my life? This is thy new spouse talking with thee, please look up at her.

Kásim.—O my poor spouse, let me apprise thee that thy royal falcon has to-day fallen from his flight.

Fátimah, the bride.—O light of my eye, tell me where art thou going; let not the bride perish from grief owing to thy absence.

Kásim (to Fátimah).—Oh! do not set me on fire with this thy conversation, O thou who shinest as it were a burning candle, while I am like a moth.‡ Behold the miserable state of my uncle, and the cruelty of the enemy! See how he is leaning on his spear with bended neck! What benefit

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* See note †, p. 214, vol. i.

† See note ‡, p. 118, vol. i.

‡ A favourite Oriental comparison.

can I derive from youth if I spare my soul from being made a sacrifice at the stirrup of my dear uncle?

Fátimah, the bride.—O spheres, how long wilt thou be at enmity with me? May God make thee as miserable as myself. I could not enjoy the company of the bridegroom; yea, I did not delight myself in his society for a minute!

Kásim (to Husain).—May I be a sacrifice for thee, O brightness of Zahrah's* eye! now permit me to go to the field of battle, that I may offer my soul a sacrifice to the dust of thy road, and make my sacred body turn to the dust of Karbalá.

Husain.—O Kásim, thy face shall be drenched in blood at last with the sword of the tyrant; this thy body shall fall at length in the plain of Karbalá. Oh! how can I see these thy locks soaked in the blood of thy throat? but these thy hands have to be dyed, O Kásim, with some blood-tinged henna at last.

Kásim.—Oh! I do not say, dear uncle, that I am Hasan's child! but rather that thou art a king, and I am thy servant, O thou to whom the sovereigns of the earth pay homage as slaves! No matter if I be killed for the sake of thy grandfather's people, for in that case God, and His chosen Prophet, and 'Alí His elect, will be the avengers of blood.

Husain.—O blessed-natured Zainab, bring a winding-sheet for Kásim the bridegroom; but take care that his mother and bride know nothing about the circumstance.

Zainab.—How long shall I suffer in Karbalá from endless sorrow? I have to conceal the winding-sheets in the same way that I hide my griefs from others. Here is the shroud, which I have brought away from the view of Kásim's mother, to put it as a nuptial garment on Hasan's orphan boy.

Husain.—Dear sister, put it on poor Kásim; yea, wrap

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* See note, p. 22, vol. i.

the winding-sheet round his body. In dressing this good-natured youth with shrouds, care must be taken that his mother and his spouse should not see him.

Zainab.—O God, I hope Kásim's mother will not come to know this! O Lord, how hard it is for a parent to be suddenly deprived of a grown-up son! Oh! woe be to Zainab! woe be to Zainab! She has become a shroud-woman for martyrs!

Kásim's Mother (*appearing suddenly*).—Do not put on shrouds, O light of my eyes! do not dress thyself in winding-sheets, child; it makes me shudder. Throw away these things, dear son; let not my broken heart burn with fervent grief.

Kásim.—Dear mother, may I be a sacrifice for thee! I beg thy pardon; forgive me, good mother, from the bottom of thy heart and soul. Come, mother, heaven is about to lay a grievous scar on thy heart! Yea, it is going to scatter the rose-bud of thy joy with a stormy wind.

Kásim's Mother.—How can I turn aside my eyes from thee, and permit that thou shouldest go to the field of battle, my child? I am a stranger here, and have none else beside thee. I shall never allow thee to join the fray, though thou be quite ready to do so. O Kásim, if I be removed but an instant from thy presence, excessive weeping will soon make me blind.

Kásim.—O my sorrowful mother, the business is now ended; the day of my presence with thee is far spent, it is now time for us to part. My measure-glass is full with destiny's pure wine; my turn is already over; the period of life is at its close. Adieu to thee, dear mother; good-bye, my dear aunt; life is making way for death with rapid strides.

Kásim's Mother.—O my young son, linger a little, that I may once more see thy face. O my sorrow-portioned youth, mercy! O thou in every malady my physician, pity me!

Kásim.—There is not much time left ere my name will

be blotted from the volume of this world's life; and I shall lie down in the lap of the earth, seeing young martyrs lying around me on every side.

The Bride.—My beloved spouse, I fear thou mayest not come back. I suspect this from what thou hast said. In whose hand or to whose care dost thou commit us? You must consider the pain of separation as slight.

Kásim.—O mother, thou must not leave my dear spouse a minute alone after I have died. O dear love (*turning to his wife*), it is the time of departure: the hour of separation between me and thee has arrived.

The Bride.—Tell me, dear thing, where am I to find thee on the great Day of Resurrection? and how am I to gather a rose from thy blooming face?

Kásim.—Thou mayest recognise me on that day by this shroud that I now wear, when I stand amid the party gathered around Husain.

The Bride.—O dear Kásim, I pray thee do not go to fight with the infidels; return to thy chamber; do not hurt my heart more!

The Bridegroom.—For God's sake, give up crying, dear love; let not my poor mind be troubled! behold thy unhappy father standing in the midst of an unbelieving nation, all alone!

The Bride.—I will not go to my chamber at all; but will sit here in this place beating sadly on my head till I die from grief.

The Bridegroom.—O my dear spouse, thou light of the eye of the righteous. I adjure thee by my soul to lift thy head from the dust of the road. O my afflicted aunt, Zainab, come out of thy tent to see, if but for an instant, the sad condition of my dear spouse.

Zainab (*to Kásim*).—Nay, dear nephew, do not grieve the poor dear bride to such an extent; go and sit by the sorrowful creature for a while.

Kásim (*riding away*).—Come, let me kiss thy hand and beg thy pardon; forgive me with all thy heart and soul.

Come, let me kiss thy feet, O prisoner of sorrow; go and blacken the marriage-couch, O Zainab!

Kásim's Mother.—Oh, do not make my days dark by thy departure! thy poor mother is shelterless! go not! Hear my saying, O my Alexander; the path is enshrouded in thick darkness, and there is no way at all; depart not! The wolves are on all sides lying in wait for their prey! my dear Joseph, set not out toward the well.

Kásim.—O family of the offspring of him who is the king of all nations, God preserve you! O ye sadly afflicted in this cruel country, may God keep you! If I have left any sad impression on your minds by my ill-conduct, I beg your pardon, and meanwhile bid you adieu!

Kásim's Mother.—O my elegant-statured youth, God be with thee! To-day thou art going to consume me with the fire of separation. O thou hope of my morrow, God be with thee!

Kásim (addressing the unbelievers).—O ye people devoid of shame and remorse, ye who have given the name of Islám to infidelity; it is not at all proper that you apostates should be called Muslims, while your unbelief is so manifest. Are ye not the descendants of the prophets? Ye are indeed worthy of a robe of honour from the Divine Judge. Yazíd* the tyrant is from the seed of adultery, and a base-born is not fit to hold the Khalífat, the which is due only to Husain and his holy family, which you are extirpating cruelly for the sake of a bastard, on whose profane origin may God's curse alight!

'Umar the son of Sa'd.—Who art thou, vaunting so proudly of thy lineage? art thou wounded in thy heart that thou appearest so excited and criest out continually? Methinks thou art one newly married, for thou art finely dressed, upon my word; but tell me why thou art so slender and pale, so thin and sickly?

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* See note †, p. 17, vol. i.

Kásim.—I am one whose ancestor is the Messenger of God, the chief and the first link of all the prophets. My name is Kásim, the son of Hasan; my grandfather's name is the Lion-hearted Champion. I do not care at all if I be slain, martyrdom being the heritage of my forefathers.

'Umar-ibn-Sa'd.—O people, deprive him of the sweetness of life, and make his companions lament his death! Go forth to the field and fight this miserable wretch, so as to deprive his bride of his further society.

Kásim prepares to fight.—O owner of the famous sword Zú'l fakár,* it is the time of help! O begetter of the seven and four,† it is the time of help! (*Returning from the battle and addressing Husain.*) Uncle, uncle, I thirst, I thirst!

Husain.—Come, let me put the ring‡ of the glorious Messenger in thy mouth, to quench thy thirst withal, O decorator of the florid meadow of hope!

Kásim.—O dear spouse, come, let me see thee once again! let me cull blossoms of delight from the rose-garden of thy cheeks! but as my great-grandfather is anxiously expecting me in Paradise, I am constrained not to hold a long conversation with thee, and so bid thee adieu!

Kásim (*in the field, calling to Husain*).—O hope of thy people, come and save Kásim, who is merged in his own blood!

Kásim.—Oh, bring out the marriage-couch from the decorated chamber, for Kásim has returned from his journey prosperously! Tell the bride to come out to meet the bridegroom, that she may observe how her beloved is deluged in blood.

Zainab (*to Kásim's mother*).—Come, for the fates are against thee; thou hast become desolate! Arise! put on black, for thou art sonless. Thy cypress is hewn down

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* See note ‡, p. 65, vol. i.

† That is, the eleven Imáms who, according to the Shí'ah tradition, succeeded 'Alí.

‡ See note, p. 81, vol. i.

with the axe of tyranny! the newly married son is covered with gore.

Kásim's Mother.—Alas O Musulmans! Alas for this cruel and unjust event! Oh! heaven after all has caused the enemy to prosper! O God, it was but to-day when I decorated his nuptial couch, and in a few hours' time I am made to lament his death!

SCENE XIX.

DEATH OF ABBAS, THE BROTHER OF HUSAIN.

THE fortunes of war had begun to turn against Husain in the field of Karbalá. Not only had many of his trusted adherents been put to the sword, but his son 'Alí Akbar and his nephew Kásim had fallen beneath the overwhelming numbers of the enemy. "Dye thou thy hand and sword with the enemy's blood, and fight back to back with thy brother against them," was the command of the undaunted Imám to his brother and standard-bearer, the warrior 'Abbás. Readily obeying the injunction, after bidding adieu to his family, he accompanied his brother to the front, and at once wrought sad havoc amongst the ranks of the enemy. At length, however, he fell mortally wounded, and hearing from the lips of Husain that the latter was gratified with the prowess displayed by his standard-bearer, the brave soldier died happy a martyr—according to the Shí'ah tradition—in the cause of the true faith.

Husain.—O beloved Prophet of the merciful and incomparable Creator, look upon us, and behold the seditions raised up against us in the world. O 'Alí, defender of God's cause, see thine own dear child with eyes full of tears amid the inhabitants of Kúfah.*

'Abbás.—O 'Alí, thou intimate of the great Creator, the Lord of the universe, thou asylum of the destitute, see the cruelty of the enemy. Dear father, it is not a great

* See note, p. 9, vol. i.

distance from Najaf * to Kúfah; put out thy head from the grave, and witness our destitution and solitariness. Behold the adornment of the Prophet's shoulder, the brightness of the virgin's eye, in the hand of the unbelievers.

Shimar † (*challenging Husain*).—O Husain, thou brilliant pearl of the deep sea of God's mysteries, thou shining gem of the jewellery of Haidar ‡ the champion; O thou whose are the seraphims, thou the similitude of Ahmad § the elect messenger of God, thou who art like the Lion of God in the field of battle, the army of Kúfah and Shám ‖ all thirst for thy blood. O lion-hearted, panther-tearing, victorious Husain, hasten to battle, thou judge of the conspicuous law of the Prophet, who art considered in all the parts of the world as the rightful lord of all men.

Husain.—O spheres, I am Husain the blossom of the rose-garden of Haidar; am I not indeed the light of the two eyes of the Prophet? Thou cruelly didst strike out the tooth ¶ of the chosen Prophet with a stone; thou maliciously cleftest the holy head of my father asunder; thou didst fracture the side of the virgin tyrannically and brutally; thou didst pour the poison of thine enmity in the throat of my dear brother; and now thou hast brought Husain to Karbalá, intending to make my sister destitute and helpless.

Zainab.—O orbit, what is the cause of this thy enmity and cruelty as regards Husain, the light of mine eyes? Thou hast brought my dear Husain to the place of trial, having made him an exile, a destitute person without any friend or relation. Did not thy heart burn in pity for Husain, whom, by way of malice, thou hast expatriated from home?

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* See note, p. 241, vol. i.
‡ See note, p. 39, vol. i.
‖ Syria.
† See note, p. 43, vol. i.
§ See note *, p. 37, vol. i.
¶ See note, p. 129, vol. i.

Sukainah.—O Lord, my dear Husain's eyes are full of tears; I do not know what has happened to him that he is so restless. Why should my dear aunt drop her head sorrowfully on her knee, and shed tears? Would to God Sukainah had not come into the world! well would it be if she had died in Madínah.

Husain.—Come, Sukainah, thou light of mine eyes, let me hold thy head a moment in my bosom. How sorry am I that thou art to become fatherless, and a prisoner amongst the army of the enemy! I brought thee up like a rose in my own lap; but alas! I could not derive any enjoyment from thy beautiful face.

Sukainah.—O Lord, what shall I do, seeing there is none to assist? there is none to pay any regard for Sukainah. I am no longer able to bear thirst, and am too weak to help myself.

Zainab.—O brightness of my eyes, O Sukainah, my wingless and fatherless bird. I also, dear sore-hearted niece, am in great trouble from the pangs of thirst. I know no other water than the tears of the eyes, O soul-distressed creature!

Sukainah.—O uncle, I cannot do otherwise than die owing to this excessive thirst; think of some remedy for me, else I shall lose my life. I am a stranger in this place, and can scarcely find out my way to any habitation, and thou art aware of my condition, that my palate is parched with thirst. Come, uncle, do, for God's sake, an act of benevolence towards me! I have lost all patience, think about some water for me.

'Abbás.—O Sukainah, thou dost deprive my body of its vigour and strength by thy pitiful cry. I know no water but what is in my tearful eyes; behold the sowers of the seed of malice ready to cut at the fountain-head of the water of faith, most tyrannically. In this wilderness I am not only ashamed before thee, but do not know how to look thy companions in the face.

Husain.—O noble standard-bearer of Husain, thou light

of my two eyes, O thou who art the strength of my arm, and dearer to me than my very soul, take a skin with thee and go to the field of battle, saying to the enemy, "Thus saith Husain, with a burning heart, 'Is it proper that the Euphrates, a river like the sea, should be forbidden us? Is not this very water part of the dowry of Zahrah * my mother? By our Lord, my poor, unfortunate family have committed no crime in the world, nor are they of the enemies of God and His Messenger. Kindly, then, grant us a few drops of that water of which even the wild beasts of the desert always freely partake!'"†

Sukainah (*addressing 'Abbás*).—Come, uncle, may I be offered for thee! take from me this skin, for my body and soul are both burning with thirst in this desert. Oh! if they sell water even at the price of life, I beg thee, dear uncle, to get it for me!

'Abbás (*to Ibn Sa'd*).—O Ibn Sa'd,‡ addicted to cruelty, thou who hast hoisted up the flag of thy tyranny, thus saith the offspring of the best of mankind, Husain, the most exalted king, "Granting that, in thy opinion, this innocent one has left no blank in the book of disobedience; admitting that, according to thy supposition, I am a great sinner indeed, our children must doubtless be free from fault. If my crime has passed all bounds, what canst thou lay to the charge of my children? certainly nothing. Husain's youngest daughter is crying bitterly from thirst; be kind and merciful to the little children, and fear the cold sighs of the orphans."

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* See note, p. 22, vol. i.

† Husain bitterly reproached the enemy with their cruelty in depriving him and his adherents of access to the waters of the Euphrates. "Your cattle, elephants, horses, and camels," said he, "have plenty to drink; but my family is exceedingly distressed and crying out for water. Among what tribe do ye find it thus? The children's throats are parched with thirst, and for want of water the milk is dried up in the mother's breast."—Herklot's "Qanoon-e-Islam," p. 165, ed. 1832.

‡ See note ‡, p. 214, vol. i.

Ibn Sa'd—O 'Abbás, brave as a lion, and fierce as a tiger, thou panther-defeating, leopard-hunting 'Abbás, thou whose sword, like that of the Lion of God himself, now dazzles in heaven, and now flashes on earth, give up the idea of getting water; it is impossible for thee to obtain a drop of it until thou be slain by the injustice of mankind, O 'Abbás.

'Abbás (*returning*).—O Lord, what shall I do, and how shall I express my shame? I have been at the brink of a running stream, and yet my throat is dry with thirst. O Lord, how can I go to Husain with such sad news? I wish I had not been alive in the world to-day! How can I return to that royal personage with empty skin and dried-up lips? What shall I say to him to clear myself? May my tongue be dumb!

Husain.—Grieve not, O 'Abbás, thou light of my sight; why shouldst thou weep, my dear brother? O rest of my soul, what is the cause of thy lamentation? Methinks the inhabitants of Kúfah have refused to give thee water. The God of the two worlds shall avenge me on them! Thou needst not, dear one, be anxious owing to that. I have made the cause of the Creator manifest before the eyes of these sinners, who are wicked as Nimrod.*

'Abbás.—May I be a ransom for thee, O solar orb of the sphere of bashfulness! thus did the malicious fellow answer, "If the whole world be inundated with streams, Husain shall not see a drop of fresh water unless he first offers the hand of allegiance to Yazíd;† for then, and then only, shall the cause be fairly decided."

Husain.—O my powerful, lion-like 'Abbás, my valiant warrior, my famous hero, for the sake of the kind regard which thou hast towards Husain, trouble me not, seeing I am at my last breath. It is time that thou shouldst stroke with thy kind hand the heads of my children, and soothe the heart of my little daughter as an orphan girl.

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* See note †, p. 177, vol. i.

† See note †, p. 17, vol. i.

'Abbás.—Be the dust of thy feet in this and the next world a crown for my head; be the ring of thy thraldom an ornament for my neck and shoulders. I am not a brother to thee, but a slave, with a ring of perpetual slavery in the ears, and my mother is no more than a bondwoman amongst the maid-servants of thy blessed mother. Thou art announcing to me my safety and thine own destruction. Without thee in this world, let the dust of the universe be on my head!

Husain.—The desire of martyrdom has to-day settled on my mind; the scar of Akbar has melted me down like a candle. On whatsoever side I look in the battle, I see my own young men rolling in dust and blood before me. Of my life there remaineth no more than an hour. Here is Karbalá and thou and my sister are all at hand. This is my daughter Sukainah, and this is my poor son 'Abid-dín,* these are the children one by one, and this is the rest of the family. Be pleased to protect all kindly, after the accursed Shimar shall have unjustly cut my throat with his dagger.

'Abbás.—If 'Abbás is worthy to receive the honour of martyrdom, why should he be prohibited from it? Am not I also of the seed of Haidar? If I bestow not my head as a free offering in thy way, let my mother sit in the house of mourning and weep for me. I desire vehemently that my body should be turned into powder by the hoofs of horses for thy sake. A slave, with the ring of servitude in his ears, can never depart from the gate of his master; my humble supplication to thee is, not to drive me away from this portal.

Husain.—Yes, thou art a royal falcon soaring in the atmosphere of martyrdom, thou art the unique cavalier on the race-ground of the kingdom of felicity. Thou shalt precede me both as regards martyrdom and reaching Paradise; this thy handsome face shall roll in blood before

* See note †, p. 96, vol. i.

me. Sit down by me, dear brother, that I may with pleasure see thy face once again.

'Abbás.—It is fit thou shouldst glory, O 'Abbás, since thy request is granted thee. A thousand thanks! thou hast become at last a sacrifice for 'Alí Akbar. It is proper thou shouldst set up the flag of glory above the two worlds, seeing thou hast become a ransom for the feet of the martyr king of Karbalá. Yet thou art but one of the least of his servants; will it not suffice thee that thou art addressed, O brother, by Husain?

Husain.—Brother, it is high time both of us should swim in our own blood, that both should start from this plain of affliction for the lofty realms of Paradise. Put on thy armour, for behold, after an hour we must wallow, like half-killed birds, in dust and blood!

'Abbás.—Henceforth it is very hard for 'Abbás to love, seeing that Husain is to-day overwhelmed with grief. Put on thine armour, O 'Abbás! peradventure to-morrow thou mayest be able to make the steed of glory leap over the roof of the ninth heaven by what thou canst do to-day.

Husain.—O Lord, I have none left to-day except poor 'Abbás, and separation from him will leave a scar on my heart. Must I put on weapons of war and hasten to my own slaughter? Oh! how can I choose to-day that my body should die?

'Abbás (*wrapping himself in a winding-sheet*).—O Lord, where is my poor sorrowful mother to see me passing in the valley of the shadow of death? Her son, who is but thirty-one years of age, being deprived of youth, is, with a melancholy heart, putting on funeral garments with his own hand. O death, give me respite for a time, that haply I may offer my head and my soul on behalf of Husain. "We belong to God, and unto Him we are returning."

Husain (*putting on a winding-sheet*).—Alas! I do not know whether Fátimah, my poor mother, knows the sad

state of her dear son. Possibly she can see now with a troubled mind that the elegant cypress * of her meadow is clothed in a shrouding dress. I cover myself with a winding sheet to-day because I have no one to care for my body after I die. "I fly for refuge to God from the reprobate Satan." "And we ransomed him with a great sacrifice."†

'Abbás.—Husain is to-day alone without any companions. Oh that he had Awn and Ja'far ‡ to-day on the right and on the left! Oh, what a good thing it would be if Kásim, the renowned youth, could be now with us in this state of helplessness, O Lord God!

Husain.—Dear brother, arise from thy place, and fetch me my horse Zú'l Janáh,§ that to-day I may ride and fight the battle of faith against the malicious unbelievers. Know that after an hour's time thou and I shall both be beheaded, with parched lips, by the cruelty of the wicked and unjust enemy.

'Abbás.—Place thy foot in the stirrup, thou king of heaven. May my poor soul be offered to-day as a sacrifice for thee! O Lord, has Husain to-day no friend in this desert who will offer himself as a ransom for this king of noble descent?

Husain.—I place my foot in the stirrup, but angels on my right hand, jinns‖ on my left hand, are weeping to-day owing to my desolation. O Lord, have mercy on my poor orphans, for I am, O great Creator, giving myself freely up to-day for Thy cause!

'Abbás.—I put my feet in the stirrup, but the orphans to-day on the right hand, and Zainab and Kulsúm on the left, are bemoaning my misery. Oh that Fátimah were now here in this fearful desert to wipe off the dust from the face of her dear son! Husain is thirsty, and I am

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* See note, p. 10, vol. i.
† Quotations from the "Kur'án."
‡ See note *, p. 295, vol. i.
§ See note, p. 242, vol. i.
‖ See note, p. 24, vol. i.

parched, while the son of Sa'd is indifferent. O Lord, what can I alone do against such a numerous army?

Husain.—O my sympathising friend, my noble standard-bearer, O thou the like of whom the eyes of the stars have never seen, the time of offering oneself a sacrifice is at hand. I cannot linger long, and defer being a martyr. It is time I should enjoy the delights of martyrdom; and run cheerfully the race that is set before me in order to win the happy prize. If thou hast in thy head any idea about the society of the nymphs of Paradise, accompany me, then, for the king requires a standard-bearer with him. O dear brother, set up thy flag and carry it manfully behind the back of thy brother. When the ensign of my sovereignty is fully displayed, then join in the field of trial for battle. I am like Abraham,* and this field is my altar, and thou, being my offering, must accompany me whither I would. Dye thou thy hand and sword with the enemy's blood, and fight back to back with thy brother against them.

'Abbás.—With all my heart, dear brother. 'Abbás is quite ready most respectfully to obey thy orders. Set out at once this very minute for war, and trust with confidence in the great Creator for assistance.

Husain.—The villain-nourishing world has a quarrel against us; let us turn to the tents and bid adieu to our own family, for I know well that we shall never again visit them. O poor thing, this being our last day, it is necessary we should go and see the disconsolate ladies; we must visit Zainab and Kulsúm, our sisters, together with 'Abid-dín, my friendless and sorrowfulson. Oh, let me behold once more the dear faces! Have great patience, child; if I live I shall get thee instantly water from the Euphrates.

'Abbás.—O dear niece, let me kiss thy throat with sorrow, for thy neck shall be galled by a rough rope put around it.

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* See note ‡, p. 290, vol. i.

Husain.—Let me rub off the dust of misery from thy face; thou shalt receive many, many blows from a cruel people.

'Abbás.—Adieu, O my invalid 'Abid-dín! adieu, O my chief and general.

The Imám Husain.—When thou goest to Syria in a most miserable condition, take great care of Kulsúm thy aunt, dear child.

'Abbás.—Oh, behold! I am taking hold of thy skirts, begging thee to show kindness to Zainab in this journey.

Husain.—Yes, since poor deprived Akbar is not alive, be kind and help her to ride on her camel.

Zainab.—Separation! O partakers of sorrow, separation! absence! O most intimate friends, absence!

Kulsúm.—O ye who have lost your brother, help me; let torrents of heart's blood stream down from your eyes.

Zainab.—Is there anyone bereaved of a dear brother to mourn pitifully over Husain's sad condition?

Kulsúm.—O dear brother, where art thou going? wilt thou leave me alone? Where art thou proceeding? Weapons of war on thy body, why a winding-sheet round thy neck? A zealous brother wast thou; why dost thou, then, go away without saying a word? Thou didst pull my litter from home to this vale of exile; after thou hast expatriated me so, why intendest thou to leave me alone?

Husain.—O Zainab, if I have lamentably quitted thy side, thou must excuse my poor friendless children.

'Abbás (*to the family*).—O family of Husain, heaven is rotating most singularly; it has become 'Abbás' turn to suffer misery.

Zainab.—Again the sound of farewell reaches my ears anew. Oh! I shall well nigh lose all sense and feeling, for the anxiety overpowers me.

'Abbás.—Come, destitute sister, see my face once for all, for we shall not behold one another any more until the Day of Judgment.

Zainab.—O brother, do not speak thus! my day is come to a close; it is Zainab's turn to put on black garments.

'Abbás.—It was decreed by God that I should be killed in Karbalá cruelly, under many trials and temptations.

Zainab.—Alas these powerful arms which shall be cut off from the body! May the soul of me, the afflicted, be a ransom for this thy head!

'Abbás.—Weep no more, helpless sister, and let not tears flow down thy cheeks, thou light of mine eyes.

Zainab.—O light of mine eyes, let the dust of mourning be scattered over my head. If thou goest away, Husain will doubtless remain helpless and destitute.

Husain.—Adieu, poor sorrowful Zainab; adieu, my afflicted sister.

'Abbás.—Farewell, poor Kulsúm, my sister; farewell, O unhappy and distracted creature.

Husain.—Adieu, Sukainah, thou light of mine eyes; adieu, thou matchless little thing.

'Abbás.—Farewell, O sorrowful spouse of Husain, thou light of my tearful eyes.

Husain.—Adieu, O poor miserable child, adieu; thou shalt soon become a despised orphan.

'Abbás.—Farewell, O substance of my soul; farewell, thou brightness of my eyes.

Husain.—Seeing I have done this for the sinfulness of the people of the Prophet, how canst thou wish to see my face, or smell the dust of my tomb? I am but a fragrant rose, blown away by an autumnal wind.

Zainab.—I hoped, dear brother, thou wouldst be always by my side, but there was no chance of it. I trusted thou wouldst remain a crown of glory on my head, but no such happiness was in store for me. I desired earnestly to have thee, at the time of death, at my pillow, that thou mightest faithfully close my eyes when I give up the ghost, but it could not be. Yea, I vainly hoped to return one day or

other to our own native land, with heart-felt affection, and that thou, O my good star, might guide me all the way; but how false was the hope!

Husain.—I vehemently wished to be the light of thy sight, but it was not possible. I greatly desired to turn, like a moth, round thy candle-like face, but it could not be done. Tell my mother Zahrah that my heart much wished to be a door-keeper of thy sacred shrine, and to shed there tears of true affection for thee; but, alas! it was not to be possible.

Kulsúm (*addressing 'Abbás*).—My heart wished I should always be kissing thy moon-like* face, but it could not be. Would that I might continually serve thee day and night with all my soul, but it is impracticable. Our mother, at the time we started, seriously charged me to take care of thee day and night, but it could not be done. O dear brother, when I return to our country, what shall I say to her, if thy poor mother should inquire about thy circumstances?

'Abbás.—My heart wished, dear sister, to travel about with thee, but it could not be done. I hoped to return home together with thee, but how impossible it is! When thou goest back to our country, dear sister, say to my poor mother that thou didst try thy utmost to go back with 'Abbás, but it was futile.

Kulsúm.—O Lord, what shall I do? and how am I to remedy the case? I can only patiently submit and bear it. O Lord, what land of Karbalá is this? whence came these afflictions and sorrows? This Karbalá is a trial for souls, it is a place for mourning over young men killed. O my dearly loved brother, listen to thy handmaid. Do not allow me to suffer the pain of thy absence and separation. How can I bear such things with patience?

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* See note, p. 7, vol. i.

Husain (*to Zainab*).—Come, O my sister, thou mother of all adversity and misery.

Zainab.—Here am I, brother, tell me what is thy request?

Husain.—What wilt thou do when I am gone—after I am dead?

Zainab.—Alas! thou shalt be slain by a wicked nation!

Husain.—O distracted creature! thou shalt see my head on the top of a spear.

Zainab.—O brother, may my eyes never behold such a sight!

Husain.—Thou shalt be shamefully made a captive by the inhabitants of Kúfah.

Zainab.—Tell me how am I to bear this grievous matter, and what am I to do?

Husain.—O sister, always show kindness to poor Sukainah!

Zainab.—Oh, do not be anxious about her! may dust be cast on my head!

Husain.—She is a memorial of thy Husain.

Zainab.—May my soul be a ransom for the light of thy eye!

Husain.—Sister, thou shalt surely see my head on a spear.

Zainab.—Dear brother, how can I have patience?

Husain.—Thou shalt go bare-headed to Syria, sister.

Zainab.—Oh! what shall I do? I shall be overwhelmed with sorrow in those sad days.

Husain.—God keep thee, O thou who art in a sad state! I have given myself a sacrifice for my followers.

Zainab.—May my body and soul be offered for them also!

'Abbás.—Come to me, Kulsúm, my troubled sister.

Kulsúm.—Here am I, O my standard-bearing prince!

'Abbás.—Know, sister, I shall be slain maliciously.

Kulsúm.—How can I go without thee to Madínah?

'Abbás.—I long to see the dear face of my daughter left behind.

Kulsúm.—I feel miserably sorry for thee, dear brother.

'Abbás.—Show kindness to my poor daughter.

Kulsúm.—I will spend my life in her service.

'Abbás.—None must call her an orphan after I am gone.

Kulsúm.—Yes, every fatherless child suffers pain.

'Abbás.—None must cruelly slap her on the face.

Kulsúm.—Be not sad about that; I will do my best to help her.

'Abbás.—God be thy keeper! I am going away, sister.

Kulsúm.—Go! May God be thy defender and helper!

Husain.—O Lord, help Husain's poor sisters; see how his daughters are brought low. I adjure you, by my soul, make no more lamentations. That will do; let not your eyes shed tears of blood so copiously! Return to your tents and pay kind attentions to my poor sick son, Imám Abid. Have pity on this sad and sorrowful heart, and forgive Husain and 'Abbás their shortcomings.

Zainab.—How helpless must the sister be whose brother dies at a distance! let dust be cast on the head of the woman who is brotherless.

Husain (*addressing 'Abbás*).—Dear brother, gird thy loins, for our time is very short; turn to the field of battle and make ready for war. If this army, God forbid, should separate us the one from the other, we shall never be able to see each other's faces any more.

'Abbás.—I shall never separate myself from thee as long as I live; and if I die for thy sake, how fortunate would I then be! Should the enemy, however, (God forbid!) make a separation between me and thee—should they be able to remove me far away from thee—where am I to see thy dear face, beloved brother, and how am I to be acquainted with thy circumstances in the field?

Husain.—If thou be separated from me by accident, go out of the field at once in the direction of the camp and seek me there; and if I miss thee in the field, I shall try to

find thee there; if I fail to discover thee, I will draw out my sword against this wicked enemy, and ask, "Where is my brother?"

'Abbás.—When I am removed from thee, lay a sword on these villains, destroy the whole of them, then probably thou wilt find me. I hope, O king of religion, that in passing through the lines, thou wilt be kind enough to sit at my head and lament loudly over me.

Husain (*addressing the enemy*).—O ye who are devoid of all reputation and honour——

'Abbás.—Ye who have given the name of faith to infidelity——

Husain.—Ye who were destined to ill at your incarnation——

'Abbás.—Are ye companions of God? nay, rather ye are at enmity with His Prophet?

Husain.—Yazíd the tyrant is from the seed of adultery.

'Abbás.—And how can one born of an adulteress deserve the Khalífat or be fit to rule?

Husain.—Can he be an ornament or adornment of the throne?

'Abbás.—'Alí alone and his holy children can be such as Husain.

Husain.—O people, I am the child of the Prophet.

'Abbás.—Husain is lord, and I am his servant.

Husain.—I am the true follower of the Prophet's religion.

'Abbás.—I am the heir of Haidar's high office.

Husain.—O ye people far removed from morality, I am Husain.

'Abbás.—And I am entitled the moon of Baní Háshim.*

Husain.—I do not care an atom whether I am killed.

'Abbás.—Martyrdom is the heritage of my forefather.

Husain.—I shall shed so much blood in the plain of enmity——

'Abbás.—That the Creator of the world will say, "Bravo!"

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* See note *, p. 200, vol. i.

Husain.—O ye inhabitants of Kúfah, what are our faults?

'Abbás.—Why should a stop be put to our proceedings?

Husain.—Do ye not know, O wicked people——

'Abbás.—That of the family of the Prophet, small and great——

Husain.—One faints from weakness and instantly falls to the ground——

'Abbás.—Another cries out, "Thirst! Thirst!"

Husain.—Have ye compassion on our souls?

'Abbás.—Give ye some water for our children.

Husain.—For the sake of Yazíd, who is born of adulterer's seed—

'Abbás.—How can it be lawful to be cruel to the family of God's Prophet?

Husain.—If you will not intercept us in our way——

'Abbás.—We will go to Turkey or Europe.

Husain.—But if you will not let us escape with our lives——

'Abbás.—We shall lay hold of the cutting sword.

Husain.—What will you say to my mother in the Day of Judgment?

'Abbás.—My judge shall be your adversary in that day.

Ibn Sa'd.—O ye soldiers of the army, ye ill-starred Syrian troops, ye brave men of the field of battle and lion-like heroes, the famous 'Abbás, the standard-bearer of the thirsty army, the defender of the oppressed, verily 'Abbás, has come to the field for water; overthrow him with a volley of arrows; slay him with spears and daggers.

Husain (*beginning to fight*).—O amphitheatre of wonders and miracles, O defender of God's cause, take hold of the hilt of thy glittering sword.

'Abbás.—O my crowned father, 'Alí thou Lion of God, the elect, be favourable to my enterprise.

'Abbás (*at the waters of the Euphrates*).—It is not right to drink water while Husain, the king of religion, is parched with thirst; thou art a good servant indeed, do not then be so faithless.

Ibn Sa'd.—O 'Abbás, wouldest thou carry water to the camp of Husain?

The Army (to the Son of Sa'd).—O thou cruel son of Sa'd! behold the great Day of Resurrection! Husain and 'Abbás, the two luminaries, have surrounded thee on every side. Everyone is plunging himself into this sea of strife, the stock of life of the people of Kúfah is set on fire with the flaming sword, which scatters to the winds, most unsparingly, the harvest of existence amongst the Syrians.

Husain (fighting).—O shameless nation, beware of the Day of Resurrection, and be abashed before the face of the Prophet, the best of mankind. Does not the cloak I am wearing belong to your Prophet? Is not this the brilliant turban of the elected Prophet which you see on my head.

The Army (to Ibn Sa'd).—O prince of the world, the reins are gone from our hand. Mercy! mercy! deliver us from 'Abbás, the fierce lion, and save us from the king of the age himself! Help thy army, for they are all undone; the world is darkened. Alas! alas!

Ibn Sa'd.—O gallant army, put the horse of cruelty and enmity to full speed, and make a separation between these two brothers; for there is a rule among blood-thirsty warriors, that the body of the troops should fix their eyes on the standard-bearer. When the standard* is fallen, the army is sure to be put to flight; and when the army is defeated, the back of the king gets broken, and so he loses heart.

'Abbás (severely wounded).—Where art thou, O Husain? Behold 'Abbás in great trouble! see my poor body is a mark for arrows and daggers.

Husain.—Where art thou, O standard-bearer of my army in Karbalá? 'Abbás, dear brother, thou water-bearer of the plain of trial, where art thou?

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* See note *, p. 219, vol. i.

'Abbás (coming back to the camp).—My dear Kulsúm, behold 'Abbás in calamity and distress! Dear sister, did Husain come to the tent?

Kulsúm.—He came, dear brother, but he seemed to have lost himself; he had received many arrows in different parts of the body. He fell from time to time on the centre of the army, every now and then saying, "Where is my brother?"

Husain (coming back).—Where art thou, O my noble and faithful standard-bearer? I lose all patience, O water-bearer of the plain of Karbalá. Sister Zainab, knowest thou anything about my 'Abbás? Show me where is he, that I may embrace him as my sweet soul.

Zainab.—O brother, the star of our fortune is hurled down from its station. Thy 'Abbás came indeed, but he was besmeared with blood from head to foot. He inquired about thee of Kulsúm, O most beloved, and fell back again on the army of Kúfah.

Husain.—My back is galled by the burden of separation from thee; where art thou, O brother? Pain and grief will at last kill me; where is my brother?

'Abbás.—Thirst has undone me, O Lord; where is Husain? I am restless and brotherless, O Lord; where is Husain?

Shimar.—O Husain, I have lopped off the hand of thy standard-bearer with my sword. I have made thee brotherless in the plain of Karbalá.

'Abbás.—My right hand, O God, has fallen off from my body; enable my other hand to reach the skirt of Husain.

Husain.—O land of Karbalá, where is 'Abbás the brave? O land of Karbalá, where is the nightingale of my rose-garden?

'Abbás.—O hope of loving souls, come and save thy brother, who is wallowing in his own blood.

Husain (at the head of 'Abbás).—O brother, brother! now my back is broken, now my hope is lost!

'Abbás.—O Husain, art thou pleased with thy servant? art thou satisfied with his past deeds?

Husain.—Oh, may I be a sacrifice for thee and these thy wounds! I am satisfied with thee, may God be pleased with thee too!

'Abbás.—Now I go, with an earnest desire, to meet the Messenger of God, saying, "I testify that there is no God but the true God."



SCENE XX.

THE MARTYRDOM OF HASHIM.

THIS Scene relates to the death of Háshim, who fell fighting at Karbalá in defence of Husain. He died praising God in that He had allowed him to "do service" and "become the enemy of the faithless son of Ziyád, and a friend of the warlike Haidar." The troops then surround Husain, whereupon the angels in heaven ask permission to assist the Imám. This being granted, one of their number descends to earth and offers to "upset this world in a moment." But the aid is rejected by the valiant Husain. "Granted that hereafter the crown were placed on my head, that one-quarter of the inhabited world were to come under my authority, and the universe to be subservient to me; that Alexander the Great were to obey my orders, and I were to have the two worlds under my control; that even the prophet Solomon were to consent to be my door-keeper; granted all this, verily after the death of these youths to reign would be torture. The crown of the king would feel like a pan of fire on my head. Speak justly, O angel, would it be right that I should live and that the youthful Akbar should be dead? Go, O Fatrus, to thy own sphere. I am well pleased with thee. To be killed is better than to live the life which is allotted to me."

Imám Husain.—The flames of the sighs of the orphans weaken my body. The lamentations of the thirsty-lipped have reduced my frame to water. I have lost Kásim in the plains of Karbalá, and this calamity has blasted the fresh-

ness of my garden. The stature of 'Alí Akbar dropped headlong from the saddle. It was the saw of oppression that cut down my silver-stemmed cypress.* Thoughts of another existence have entered into my head, but I can scarce collect my ideas.

Zainab.—My soul within me is as brittle as glass, and will be smashed by a stone in this heart-breaking city. I am weak, and, O God! what can I do? I am uncertain where to go, or what to do.

Imám Husain.—I address thee, O fair-complexioned Zainab. Have patience and weep not so much, and do not set my heart on fire. Come to thy brother, and do not make him ashamed.

Zainab—Why should not Zainab lament for thy unprotected condition? Thou art monarch, and yet hast not an army. May I be a sacrifice for thee, O King! I burn from head to foot, and melt away like a candle. How am I to endure the agonizing torments in my sick heart?

Imám Husain.—Come to me, O my sister, for I am sorrowful. I am tired of the world and existence therein. Do not rend thy garment nor withdraw. Have patience with misfortune, O beloved sister.

Zainab (*throwing her arms round the Imám's neck*).—I long to kiss the throat of Husain, and inhale the musky scent of his hair. I am more bewildered than thy dark, dishevelled locks, O Husain. May the sorrowful Zainab be a sacrifice for thy throat, O Imám!

Imám Husain.—O my unfortunate Zainab, know that the time for separation has arrived. The happy seasons have passed, O sister, and the troubles of the world are at hand. From thirst my tongue cleaves to the roof of my mouth; I shall be killed, O sister. My fortune is asleep. O sorrowful but good-natured sister, I want thee to do something, but fear to express it.

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* See note, p. 10, vol. i.

Zainab.—May I be a sacrifice for thy heart, O sun with face like a moon! we are in private here. If thou hast a desire at heart, say what it is.

Imám.—O my unfortunate sister, thy heart is consumed by lamentations; should I express my desire, thou wouldest be still further consumed. I have no commander this day to help me in this plain of calamity. I have given up my children, and am sorrowful. I confide to thy care Sukainah, my wretched daughter. Go and bring to me at once my horse, Zú'l janáh,* for at this moment I am about to go to my revered grandfather Muhammad.

Zainab (*bringing the horse*).—O tribe of 'Alí, weep and lament!

Imám Husain (*mounting and going towards the enemy*).—Is there anyone who will help Husain? Who will come to the assistance of God's servant.

Háshim (*appears mounted*).—O my friends, would that my eyes had been blind that I might not see resurrection so manifest! I behold clearly Solomon † entangled by the demons, Jesus in the hands of the Jews, Moses the prisoner of the Egyptians. How has it come to pass that the royal hawk of the holy habitation has made his nest amongst crows and jackdaws? How is it that the Prince of Bat-há ‡ has been surrounded by the soldiers of Kúfah? Probably the Lion of God is uninformed, else he would make his Zú'l fakár§ scatter flames. (*Addressing*

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* See note, p. 242, vol. i.

† "The devils having, by God's permission, tempted Solomon without success, they made use of a trick to blast his character. For they wrote several books of magic, and hid them under that prince's throne, and, after his death, told the chief men that if they wanted to know by what means *Solomon* had obtained his absolute power over men, genii, and the winds, they should dig under his throne, which having done, they found the aforesaid books, which contained impious superstitions."—Sale's "Koran," chap. ii. p. 13, ed. 1734.

‡ See note †, p. 182, vol. i.

§ See note †, p. 65, vol. i.

Imám Husain.) Peace be on thee, O light of heaven and earth! May I be sacrificed for thee, O manifest Imám! How can I behold thee a stranger, O master, alone and unaided in the midst of this army of oppression? Where is thy father, that lion of repute and fame, that he may help thee in this desolate land?

Imám Husain.—Peace be with thee, O youth of high position; tell me, whence comest thou to this plain? Who art thou that feelest for my being a stranger, and mournest for my helpless condition?

Háshim.—My name is known as Háshim, and in war I am recognised as being brave and daring. I am the cousin and son-in-law of Ibn Sa'd the accursed, who follows the religion of the ill-conditioned Yazíd.*

Imám Husain.—Tell me, where hast thou been in this country? why hast thou come towards my wretched self? Dost thou design to kill me in anger, or dost thou intend to help me?

Háshim.—I have come to sacrifice my life for thee, to place my head at thy feet as an offering. Shew kindness towards me, and grant permission that I may yield up my dear life for thee!

Imám Husain.—As thou art the guest† of Husain, how am I to give thee permission to fight? ask me not for favours in an impossible matter. The sorrowful heart of Husain does not consent that thou shouldest be numbered among the slain in the field of battle.

Háshim.—May I be a sacrifice for thee, O thirsty-lipped‡ stranger! As I am this day become thy visitor for the first time, if thou wishest to show me favour, give me permission to sacrifice my head in thy service.

The Imám.—As thou hast placed thy head in the hoop

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* See note †, p. 17, vol. i.

† The rites of hospitality are most scrupulously observed in the East.

‡ See note, p. 14, vol. i.

of obedience, it is apparent thou hast made up thy mind to become a martyr. Go, and may my grandfather protect thee, and may success attend thee in this plain. Put on a shroud, O newly-arrived guest, who hast not as yet enjoyed the pleasures of the world.

Háshim (*putting on the winding-sheet, and proceeding to the field of battle*).—O shameless multitude, where is the chief of this army? Where is the instigator of this confusion, the ill-starred Ibn Sa'd, the destroyer of the tender plants of this rose-garden, the enemy of the soul of the Messenger and of Haidar* the warrior? Where is he?

One of the Party.—What hast thou to do with the chief of the army, O youth? What is the cause of this senseless talk, O youth? What words are these? Who art thou whose courage has bent the back of the spheres, and whose threats have dissolved the courage of the roaring lion? Tell me thy name and title, O king, and what is thy business with Ibn Sa'd, the chief of the army?

Háshim.—Thou inquirest my name and title, O malicious dog; I shall now tell thee plainly of my name and title. I am he who, when his sword is drawn, the lion of heaven is compelled to prostrate himself. My name is Háshim, O infidel. Ibn Sa'd is my uncle's son, the ill-conditioned wretch!

The Enemy (*addressing 'Umar Ibn Sa'd*).—O commander of the Syrian army, Háshim has arrived with his soldiers. He has armed himself to defend Husain with zeal, and has sent thee a message full of malice and wrath, saying, "O cousin, come forth to war, and observe the power that there is in the hands of the brave."

'Umar Sa'd.—O well-beloved cousin, what has caused thee to turn from me and give aid to Husain? For the sake of an enemy, why dost thou leave thy friends? This is not the path of fidelity; return therefrom.

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* See note, p. 39, vol. i.

Háshim.—Thou speakest truly that thou art my cousin, O ugly dog; but how can I, for thy sake, lose Paradise? Is not Husain the fresh-blown flower of the garden of the Prophet? and has he not drawn milk from the paps of Butúl?* Is not he the offspring of him at whose threshold the confidential angel Gabriel rubbed his forehead? why should not I give up my life in the cause of a person like Husain, and, of free good-will, lay down my life for the beloved?

'Umar Sa'd.—O cousin, cease from praising Husain. May the kindness of Husain be propitious to thee! thou hast disgraced the name and character of thy father, and spread over the whole world thy evil doings. No person of a baser and meaner nature than thine has proceeded from the womb of the two worlds.

Háshim.—Whether the father be good or ill, mention it not, for the goodness of the son cannot be attributed to the father. Was it not my father, O black-faced wretch, that broke the gem-like tooth of the Prophet?† Was not thy father, O base-born villain, the foremost to make war for Islám? Art thou the son of that father, O sceptic? I am the child of the other, and leave thee to judge whether I have disgraced the name of my father in the world, or whether it is thou who hast trampled the reputation of thy parent under foot.

'Umar Sa'd.—Do not draw on thyself calamity, O black-eyed monster. Withdraw thy hand from the skirts of Husain. Do not deprive thyself of the blandishments and enjoyments of this world for his sake. Without reason, why shouldest thou place thy head at the disposal of his feet? Turn thy eyes towards the plain, and see the multitude of soldiers which have, by their density, darkened the vault of heaven. Alone among this multitude and the

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* "Butúl," or "virgin," is a name applied by Muhammadans to Fátimah the mother of Husain.

† See note, p. 129, vol. i.

horses of the soldiers, I fear thou wilt be killed without mercy by them.

Háshim.—I desire to become food for the sword of calamity. May I become a sacrifice to the thirsty-lipped Sháh of Karbalá. I offer my head at the feet of the sorely afflicted king, and in his defence will become the target of the arrow of calamity. I have come pale-faced before his majesty, in hopes of appearing at the Day of Judgment with a rosy countenance.

'Umar Sa'd.—Listen to my advice, O son of my poor uncle. Do not plunge me in grief for thy loss. Do not act in a manner needlessly to occasion the shedding of thy blood, or throw thyself into the well of danger. Turn thy face towards my army, that thou mayest share in the glory and happiness with me.

Háshim.—O tyrant, cease tempting me any more. Thy speeches have no effect on me. Why should I not risk my head in the cause of him who is the descendant of the best of mankind? The angel Gabriel praises God for having been honoured with rocking Husain's cradle. Did not the Messenger of the all-loving God substantiate by his gem-like tongue that His love for Husain was equivalent to the life in His own body, and that He was of Husain and Husain was of Him?

'Umar Sa'd.—I address you, O assembly of my army, since my words have had no effect on his mind. Encompass him with hatred, and make the face of the earth red with his blood.

Háshim (*fighting*).—Praise be to God! I was sorrowful, now am I happy. I have done service and am free. I have become the enemy of the faithless son of Ziyád, and a friend of the war-like Haidar. (*After slaying Háshim, the enemy challenge Husain.*)

Imám Husain (*mounting*).—Sufficient palm trees out of the orchard of the tribe of the cloak* have fallen, O gardener

* See note †, p. 98, vol. i.

of time. Fie on thy fidelity. One only remains, and the hand of oppression is still stretched. I wonder what further are thy pretensions.

One of the Enemy's Troops.—Husain, behold the malicious tribe is come to war with thee. Are ye aware, O ye heathen, that the sultán of religion has arrived? Through fear, the lion of the heavens trembles in his lair. The ox* quivers through terror of this sharp sword. The world is unable to stand the attack of his scymiter. Know, O ye army, that the chief of the believers has arrived.

'Umar Sa'd.—Of a truth no one can stand against this horseman. At this moment there is no other resource but to fly. (*The whole army flee, and the Imám, reaching the river Euphrates, takes some water in his palm.*)

Husain.—As I am boiling like a cauldron from the fire of thirst, I drink of the river Euphrates a palm full of water.

One of the Army.—The enemy have gone towards the tents of Husain. The soldiers have departed for the purpose of plundering the women. Thou drinkest water while Zainab is being taken a prisoner, and thy Sukainah is in the hands of the soldiers. The prisoners of thy unmerciful enemy do not drink water; where is thy spirit gone? (*Husain drops the water and makes for his camp.*)

Husain.—Am I to drink water while my sister is becoming a prisoner to Shimar? † I am Husain, where is my spirit? Dust of the world be on my head! O God, I am thirsty, wearied, sick, and sorrowful; and, O Lord, the opportunity is not given me to drink water. O sister Zainab, did the soldiers of Kúfah come into thy haram or

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* "He created an angel whose office was to sustain the earth, and next made an immense rock for the angel to stand on, and then created an enormous bull, on whose back the rock rested."—Merrick's "Life of Mohammed," chap. i. p. 6, ed. 1850.

† See note, p. 43, vol. i.

not? say clearly, neither more nor less, the truth of this matter.

Zainab.—O brother, we poor creatures have no news here. There is no sign of Shimar or of his soldiers. Besides the children and infants, in a thirsty condition, and some women wanderers, there is no one here.

The Imám.—"There is no God but God." I am destined to be disappointed in life. But although I am thirsty, and tired also of my life, yet I complain not, since such is my destiny. I have consented to the decrees of an all-wise Judge in remembrance of the thirsty but rosy lips of 'Alí Akbar. I go to war, but, O God, I have no helper or defender, and am restless on account of separation from 'Alí Akbar.

One of the Army.—O Ibn Sa'd, are you negligent of the condition of affairs? Husain has come like a fierce lion to battle, with sword in hand and foaming at the mouth. He looks like Murtaza 'Alí,* and the sword like Zú'l fakár. Do not be unmindful of the strength of his arm. He has inherited bravery from his father. 'Alí, arise, and put thy army in order; arise, for it will be useless to flee away.

'Umar Sa'd.—O soldier, do not despise this saying of Husain the son of 'Alí, of which we should not be unmindful, "The remedy for all affairs should be considered before they occur": call my slave Shabis to my presence at once.

One of the Soldiers.—O Shabis, the reprobate, irreligious general calls thee to his presence. (*Addressing Ibn Sa'd.*) Shabis has arrived in waiting, O chief.

'Umar Sa'd.—O Shabis, thou must put on this robe of honour and the standard of a commander of one regiment of troops. The right is in thy keeping, be watchful on that side. Thou must this day, through oppression, render fruitless the palm tree of religion.

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* See note §, p. 66, vol. i.

Shabis proceeding with flag flying and drums beating.—O friends, Shabis has become an enemy of the Prophet and his family. Beat drums, the fight on the right side has been entrusted to me.

Imám Husain (proceeding to the corpse of 'Alí Akbar).—O 'Alí Akbar, the chief of Husain's army, hadst thou been alive thou wouldest have been a help to thy father to-day; thou hast passed from me, O my companion! I bewail for want of friends. After thee, O my dear son, where shall I find any to help? I bewail for want of friends.

Ibn Sa'd.—The season of war has arrived, and the time for tumult and uproar. Tell the commander to come to my presence.

One of the Army addressing Khaulí and Ibn Sa'd.—O Khaulí, the chief cause of tumult and uproar in the world, Ibn Sa'd has this moment required thee from among the army. For the future we shall have nothing but joy. Thanks for our good fortune, Khaulí is present?

Ibn Sa'd (giving Khaulí a sword).—O Khaulí, thou must consent to bear a disgraceful name, and in this battle decorate thyself with an ornamental sword. Proceed to the left of the army and fight the king of religion; show thy bravery in this war, and do not bring disgrace on thy name.

Khaulí (proceeding with a standard and drums).—I am the enemy of God and His chosen servants. Beat drums, for the time of war has arrived. I am Khaulí.

Imám Husain (coming to the corpse of Kásim).—Had thou been alive, O my unhappy Kásim, thou wouldest have been my helper in this day of adversity. The army of the enemy are becoming too forward. O son-in-law, I am without a helper. I bewail the want of a friend.

'Umar Sa'd.—Oh, black-hearted Shimar, thou must be steady on thy ground, and plan the battle on the banks of the Euphrates. Carry into effect the determination thou hast of slaying the sultán of religion. Cast away religion and faith, and cause the sháh of religion to die.

Shimar (going towards a part of the army).—Clothed in iron from head to foot, I am the chief of the army; beat drums, O soldiers, for I am Shimar.

The Imám (going to the corpse of 'Abbás).—This tribe sees me to-day without a brother. How strongly they have mustered against one person! The enemy, seeing me helpless, have become bold, and find all my friends lying in the dust. Where is 'Abbás to stretch his hand to assist me? A thousand pities that the same should be lopped off by the enemy. O God, come to the relief of the complaints of my sister. They have certainly heard the groans of Husain.

Zainab (giving the standard, sword, and shield to each of the women, and coming out of the tent).—O women of the tent, the dust of the world is on my head. Help, O friends! the sháh of religion is without an army. We shall be left without Husain at last! bewail. We have no men left, O women, help! O sister Kulsúm, may I be a sacrifice for thee; give aid! Take this flag instead of 'Abbás, and be the standard-bearer. O Umm Lailah, thou shouldest shed blood in lieu of tears. Hold this sword, and go and take the place of 'Alí Akbar. O mother of Kásim, in lieu of thy son grasp this shield so as to prevent an arrow taking effect on the body of Husain. O women! we will raise our voices against Shimar's cruelty, and in reply to the enemies drums, will strike our heads and breasts.

The Mother of Kulsúm.—O Lord, in this wilderness I have been distressed by the loss of six friends. Husain the destitute remains in a pitiable condition. All this calamity has befallen by the revolution of the wheel of time.

Zainab.—Thy Husain, O Lord, is in a miserable condition—ill, distressed, sorrowful, and helpless. O sister Kúlsum, take off thy veil. Where are thy six brothers, O friendless and unprotected creature?

Imám Husain.—O Lord, have mercy on my daughter

and on my sister. I am alone in this wilderness, and these widowed women compose my army.

Zainab.—Husain is friendless in this assembly, and is surrounded by helpless women. Alas 'Abbás! Alas Asghar! Alas Kásim! Oh, the remembrance of Akbar!

Imám Husain.—Woe unto me! the enemy is on every side. I am separated and alone. My army consists of women. Where is Awn? where Ja'far?* where Húr? where Muslim? where poor Kásim? and where my Akbar?

Kulsúm.—O young people, while in the world I adjure ye by the Lord, know the value of existence. O widowed women, in this transitory world, consider the worth of your brothers.

Zainab.—O dear friends, I am beside myself. I look towards the mountains and see Husain alone among a host of enemies. What is he to do in the midst of a hundred thousand?

One of the Angels.—O Lord, the king of religion is alone; help him. He is separated and has no companion; befriend him.

Another Angel.—We know the secret of this matter, O great Creator. One solitary Husain, and the enemy opposed to him a hundred thousand!

The First Angel.—Behold, O Lord, the king without an army, helpless, and without a companion. See Husain alone in the field of battle, deprived of his 'Alí Akbar.

The Second Angel.—Behold the grandson of the Prophet of God alone, helpless and companionless, his army a number of women in mourning habiliments.

The First Angel.—Have mercy on Husain, the descendant of the Prophet, O God. O Lord, commiserate the mourning condition of the women.

The Angel Gabriel.†—O ye angels, why do ye assemble and lament? Why are ye in an attitude of surprise and

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* See note *, p. 295, vol. i.

† See note, p. 15, vol. i.

bewilderment? Why have ye raised all this noise and uproar? What has happened to make it appear as if the dead had all arisen?

*The Angel Futrus.**—I address thee, O brother Gabriel; behold Husain, the glory of the family of Abraham, alone in the battle-field, and weeping while reclining on his spear. His friends and companions are none other than his groans; his army, women attired in black, and no more. The hearts of the angels of heaven burn to hear him thus sigh and weep. If thou dost permit, we will help him.

Gabriel.—Attend to me, and note this comprehensive saying, "What God ordains is for the benefit of all." Certainly the Creator of the world knows better than thou or myself. The Almighty has so ordained that it shall thus happen; from this circumstance, Husain's mediation will be proved, and the salvation of his fellow-creatures be effected through his martyrdom. If, however, thou art grieved at this occurrence, go to his assistance, for thou hast permission. Descend to the earth and comfort Husain, and, if he consent to receive aid, help him.

The Angel.—May I be a sacrifice for thee, O thou offspring of the holy city, thou stranger in the valley of Karbalá, thou beloved of the Prophet! Thy cries have reached the heavens, and I have come to the earth to save thee, O thou descendant of the Prophet; if thou permittest, I shall upset this world in a moment.

The Imám.—O ye assembly of angels, whose eyes are moist with weeping, ye seem to be unaware of the secret of this matter. The Lord is my protector and friend in this calamity, and He alone. I care not for any other but God, and Him alone. If you destroy the enemy and take vengeance, what benefit can it be now? The work that I had to do is well-nigh finished.

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* Possibly St. Peter.

The Angel.—Say, Husain, why art thou tired of thy life? Why art thou unwilling that we should fight for thee? Our object in this war is to do thee honour, and our only desire is that thou shouldest live.

The Imám.—Come with me, O Futrus, of pleasant countenance, that I may give thee a slight inkling into facts. Let us go for a stroll, and look at the field of slaughter. Come and behold my cypress, my roses, and my tulips. See how much sorrow has taken hold of me. Let us count how many young men I have lost. Come, my beloved, and see; I have a head cut off from the body. Come, brother; I have a side which is cut open, and a shoulder and hand lopped off. Come to my garden, as all my roses have been plucked.

The Angel.—My heart has become chilled as regards my own existence on beholding this tyranny. May I be a sacrifice for thee! Shidád* was not guilty of such oppression. May I be a ransom for thee! this infant with the ripped throat, tell me kindly what was his name?

The Imám.—Asghar is the name of this innocent creature, and his distressed mother night and day strikes her head against the edge of his cradle.

The Angel.—Who is this youth whom I see weltering in blood? The tips of his fingers are dyed with henna,† whose bridegroom is he?

The Imám.—O great God, be thou my avenger against this congregation! This tall figure is my son-in-law Kásim.

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* "*Ad* left two sons, *Sheddád* and *Sheddíd*, who reigned jointly after his decease, and extended their power over the greater part of the world; but *Sheddíd* dying, his brother became sole monarch, who, having heard of the *celestial paradise*, made a garden, in imitation thereof, in the deserts of Aden, and called it *Irem*, after the name of his great-grandfather. When it was finished he set out, with a great attendance, to take a view of it; but when they were come within a day's journey of the place, they were all destroyed by a terrible noise from heaven."—Sale's "Koran," chap. lxxxix. p. 490, ed. 1734.

† See note ‡, p. 118, vol. i.

The Angel.—Who is the blooming youth all besmeared with dust and blood, whose long hands are severed from his body, like one would cut a reed?

The Imám.—These two hands, O Futrus, belonged to my brave 'Abbás. On seeing 'Abbás fall from the saddle, my back bent double with grief.

The Angel.—O master, I see on this side another youth, and am in perplexity whether to designate him an angel or a fairy. I have not seen a countenance like his in this world, nor is it possible that any other will be created similar thereto. Who is this youth, O master? had he no mother? Or was he guilty of crime, and had no father to protect him?

The Imám.—This body which thou seest, so delicate, and slit with daggers, is the body of my offspring, 'Alí Akbar. The blast of death, O Futrus, caused his fruit and leaves to fall. Till the Day of Judgment his mother will weep and wail for him. After his locks, no one in this world will smell the hyacinth; after the death of his tender plant, flowers ought not to grow.

The Angel.—Seeing that they have cruelly killed thy Akbar, O master, that they have rent asunder the throat of thy Asghar, that they have brought all these evils on thy head; seeing also the tears and groans of thy sister, I wonder why thou dost not consent, O beloved spirit, to our destroying thine enemies with the tips of our wings.

The Imám (mounting).—Granted that hereafter the crown were placed on my head; that one quarter of the inhabited world were to come under my authority, and the universe to be subservient to me; that Alexander the Great were to obey my orders, and I were to have the two worlds under my control; that even the prophet Solomon were to consent to be my door-keeper; granted all this, verily, after the death of these youths, to reign would be torture. The crown of the king would feel like a pan of fire on my head. Speak justly, O angel; would it be right that I

should live, and that the youthful Akbar should be dead? Go, O Futrus, to thy own sphere, I am well pleased with thee; to be killed is better than to live the life which is allotted to me. (*Fights.*) Had 'Abbás the renowned been alive, I should never have been in the power of this treacherous foe. Being alone, I am weak and without a friend or a commander. Alas the pain of being companionless and brotherless! O friends, am I not the son of Murtaza 'Alí? Am I not the child of the Lion of God, that incomparable youth? (*Falls on the enemy.*) God is great, God is great!

Ibn Sa'd (*addressing his troops*).—This Husain has not his equal among men. Bravery is his inheritance from his father. In valour he is not to be matched. The whole world is a drop while he is the sea. Alone there is no man who can fight with him. The stratagem whereby we might subdue him is only this. Fall on him in a body, and fight him on every side. Let the whole army surround him, and turn his bright day into night.

The Imám.—O Shimar, in mercy refrain for a moment from pressing Husain. Do not push me hard with these troops. Have compassion on my groaning and sore heart; for one instant bring the son of Sa'd here to me. Replace your flaming swords in their sheaths, then let me complete my arguments with that accursed man.

Shimar (*to Ibn Sa'd*).—Know, O Amír, that Husain is surrounded by the enemy, like the moon in the midst of clouds. The King of Arabia has, however, some new idea, and he has in kindness called thee near him.

Ibn Sa'd.—Know, O Shimar, and the God of the universe is witness, that I consider it a sin to do anything opposed to the wishes of Husain. But go thyself to meet his holiness, for in the presence of Husain my face is black.* Go to him, for I will not move; see what he wishes to hear, and learn what are his intentions.

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* That is, I dare not hold up my head.

Shimar.—O Husain, give ear that I may tell thee news. All my endeavours to get Ibn Sa'd to meet thee have been fruitless. He is afraid of thy blade, and has lost heart. Say what thou desirest, as he has made me his representative.

The Imám.—O accursed, be abashed before my grandfather, the Sultán of Bat-há. Give up thine intention of killing me; have pity on Zainab. O accursed, have some consideration for my poor children, for my widowed women, and for my family. I am alone now, and have no army, thou infidel wretch. Kásim has been killed, and I have no Akbar. Do not distress the descendant of the Prophet by fighting any more, but permit him to depart in peace.

Shimar.—O Husain, how can these arguments remedy thy case? Cease such talk. Can one hear much such folly as this? Up to this moment thou hast not been wanting in leading an army. In place of Kásim, Zainab is commander-in-chief. In lieu of thy 'Abbás, Kulsúm is standard-bearer. Sukainah is commander instead of Akbar. Thou art not alone; fight, and be not fearful of defeat. Thank God that the affairs of thy army are in good condition!

The Imám.—O God, this ill-conditioned man derides me. The irony of Shimar affects me like the wounds of daggers. Thy arguments, O accursed man, are futile. Mention not the name of Akbar any more, 'Alí Akbar has passed away. Now I will use the flaming Zú'l fakár of Haidar, and send you all to everlasting perdition. (*Attacking the enemy.*) O people of Khaibar,* God is great, God is great!

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* See note *, p. 45, vol. i.

SCENE XXI.

RESCUE BY HUSAIN OF SULTAN GHIYAS FROM THE JAWS OF A LION.

WHILE Husain was fighting his enemies on the plain of Karbalá, "risking his head for the sake of those he loved," an angel appeared to him and bid him relieve a "friend in distress" in the land of Hind. At once quitting the scene of action, he was miraculously transported to that country, and found a royal hunter in pursuit of a deer and separated from his followers, while a raging lion was standing in his path ready to destroy him. Husain at once addresses the creature and asks how it dares attack a faithful Shí'ah, whereupon the lion craves for mercy as having erred in ignorance of the monarch's religion. Anxious to serve the Imám, the lion begs to be allowed to join the ranks at Karbalá and fight in defence of the faith. This is denied the creature. "Thou canst not become a martyr." Husain, having achieved his object, rejoins his family on the fatal plain of Karbalá.

Sultán Ghiyás.—The vernal effect of Nau Rúz* is seen everywhere. The hills and valleys resound with the merry noise of partridges. The nightingales have rent all their garments of patience and forbearance, and have

* "The Persian year commenced at the vernal equinox, which continues to be celebrated as *Noo Rooz*—*New Day*—that is, *New Year*, by the Persians, with whom it is still a great and joyous festival. It is the most important custom of antiquity that has survived the civil and religious revolutions of this people, and has no little influence of a national character. The first day after the sun has crossed the vernal equinox is still a time for the king, his princes and governors, to give audiences, dresses of honour, and new-coined pieces of money. Servants look to their masters for a dress at this season. The festivities

begun to pour forth their notes, inhaling from the bosom of spring the exhilarating scent of their beloved rose. I am the Monarch of India, and feel inclined to roam in the fields. I am Ghiyás, and my desire is to set out hunting. O God, I cannot understand what mystery is involved in this craving, and why this desire involuntarily draws me to the plain. O my chosen slave, arise, and bid my sportsmen mount at once.

The Chosen Slave.—O slaves of the Sháh of Hind, at this moment Ghiyás the hunter has proceeded alone for the purpose of hunting. Mount, O ye valiant sportsmen of his majesty, this instant, as he is unattended.

Ghiyás, observing a deer.—A thousand thanks, for to-day fortune is on my side. A new gazelle has arrived, and it is time for me to be on the alert. I will, alone and unattended, follow this game. Do not any of you approach, for this deer is mine. I am searching for thee, O beautiful deer! How wilt thou escape, O deer, from the pursuit of the rider? Where wilt thou go, O poor creature? Ghiyás the hunter is pursuing thee. My sword is thirsting for the blood of game. (*The deer escapes and a lion appears.*) What a wonderful change I observe in this transitory world! I find myself within the clutches of a fierce lion. What am I to do? Behold, I am trapped by fate. In place of the deer, I see opposed to me a lion. (*The lion roars.*) I am at last struck by a dart from on high. I shall not find release from this entanglement. I am perplexed what to do, and this savage lion will certainly have me for a morsel. (*The lion roars again.*) In this calamity weeping and wailing will not avail, unless there comes to my

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continue a week or ten days, business is at a stand, and the gay Persians, all in their new attire, engage in a round of visiting in which great quantities of sweetmeats, sherbets, tea, and tobacco are consumed. But even this favourite festival is clouded with a melancholy air, and some of its ceremonies are omitted when it falls in or near the *Ashurah*, or first third of the month Moharrem, the anniversary of the death of their beloved Imâm Husayn."—Merrick's "Life of Mohammed," p. 421, ed. 1850.

aid the Imám Husain. Have favour on me, O Husain, and make me happy! Come to Hind and deliver me from the claws of the lion. For the sake of Kásim, thy bridegroom, save me! For the love of the locks of 'Alí Akbar, come to my relief!

The Angel Hátif (to Imám Husain).—O Husain, thou art engaged in war with this tribe, risking thy head for the sake of those thou lovest. In the land of Hind thou hast a friend in distress. He has become the prey of a lion, and is wretched and helpless. He calls on thee repeatedly for aid. Being a friend, relieve him.

Ghiyás.—O Husain, I am caught in the clutches of the lion; I am utterly helpless in this matter. Pity me, O Husain! Relieve me, O Sháh of Karbalá! I hope for mercy from thee, O Husain.

The Imám Husain.—Behold, I come! Permit not grief to annihilate thee. Being my friend, fear not the lion. O Ghiyás, be not alarmed! Behold, Husain has arrived, thy cries have been heard by him.

Ghiyás (addressing the Imám).—O lord, approach, for my grief has increased. This fierce lion has determined to kill me. I am in the jaws of death; think of a remedy. May I be sacrificed for thee! release me from this misery.

The Imám.—I have come to relieve thee from this calamity—to cure the pains of thy heart by showing thee a little kindness. Be not sorrowful; in all places I will be thy helper. In any calamity be not grieved; I will bear thy troubles.

Ghiyás.—Why, O lord, art thou so sorrowful? Why dost thou groan so, and why let thy tears fall like rain? Tell me why thou art so pale and unhappy, and why dost thou carry thy shroud about thy person?

The Imám.—The less thou knowest of my condition the better, O Ghiyás! In the matter of love, it is not seemly to say much.

Ghiyás.—May I be a sacrifice for thee! thou sheddest tears like spring clouds. Thou bearest dagger-wounds on

thy body, more than a thousand scars in number. Thy stature should not be a mark for wounds of swords and arrows. The head of the king of kings is not the place for the edge of the sword. Inform Ghiyás of this matter, O my lord, that he may be a nightingale in the garden and a moth in the assembly.

The Imám.—What shall I say? alas! what have the people of Kúfah* done to me? They drew me to Karbalá with artifices and devices. They leagued together with a determination to kill me, and to distress my blessed body with malicious blades. They oppressed my soul with envy and malice, and inflicted on me innumerable wounds. In action I heard thy lamentations, and thy cries depriving me of my patience and forbearance, I came at once to relieve thee.

Ghiyás.—May I be thy sacrifice! thy words have distressed me. The marrow of my bones has been consumed by the narration of the events of Karbalá. How did the enemy injure thy body in this manner? Was not the valiant 'Abbás with thee?

The Imám.—O youth, increase not beyond its limit the pains of my heart. Do not mention the name of 'Abbás. Do not open the wounds of my heart. 'Abbás was with me, but the enemy separated his hands from his body with a sharp sword. When 'Abbás became numbered with the fallen, my back bent with sorrow for the loss of the fairest of the fair.

Ghiyás.—May my soul be a sacrifice for thy unhappy body! Where was thy son-in-law Kásim at that moment? Tell me, did not Kásim help thee in thy time of trouble? Where was that lion when his aid was needed?

The Imám.—The mention of Kásim makes me forget all joy; his nuptial-bed has been scattered by the winds like the throne of Solomon.† His stature dropped and his tree

* See note, p. 9, vol. i.

† "The wind brought back *Solomon's* throne in the evening, after having carried it to a distant country in the morning."—Sale's "Koran," chap. xxi. p. 271, ed. 1734.

remained fruitless. My Kásim was killed, and his bride was left a widow.

Ghiyás.—O Imám, thou hast seared my heart by what thou hast said. May I be sacrificed for thee! thou hadest an 'Alí Akbar. In such time of distress, did not he fight?

The Imám.—Thy question has set my candle alight. Thy words cause me to burn. The remembrance of my manly 'Alí Akbar! Oh, the thought of his bright locks! the memory of his graceful stature, his scented hair, his red lips, his head and neck! All fell beneath the sword of oppression. O 'Alí Akbar, the martyr of the happy Shí'ahs!

Ghiyás.—Take me with thee, O Husain, to the land of Karbalá, that I may this day sacrifice my life for thee!

The Imám.—It is not thy lot to be killed for my sake! Thy duty is to return to thy country, and to the land of thy birth. But make mention of my history to our friends, and give them an account of this occurrence. If thou findest any stranger in Hind, be kind to him for the sake of me the homeless. If thou becomest thirsty, think of my parched lips, then proceed to drink water from the cool springs. If any youth die in Hind as a stranger, think of my 'Alí Akbar. As long as life may remain in thy body, keep up lamentations annually for the chief of the thirsty-lipped.*

Ghiyás.—Give me permission, as I am sorrowful and desire to kiss thy blessed feet. I am overwhelmed with tears, and for ever shall be under an obligation to thee.

The Imám.—Go to Hind, and be not sorrowful on my account. Thou art a servitor of my Court, do not fear this creature. (*Addressing the lion.*) And thou, O lion, why hast thou placed thyself in the way of my follower? Why hast thou grieved my beloved, and broken his heart by grief? What power or daring hast thou to oppress and annoy the friends of Husain, thou bold creature?

* See note, p. 14, vol. i.

The Lion.—May I be a sacrifice for thee! forgive my fault. Although a lion, I am still a dog at thy threshold! I am in fear and terror of thee. O my lord, forgive me; I did not know he was one of the beloved.

The Imám.—I have passed over thy offence; but, for the sake of Husain, do not meditate oppression towards the followers of Husain. Always be friendly to my supporters, the Shí'ahs. If any are disposed to be the foes of Husain, be thou their enemy.

The Lion.—O beneficent king, what are my duties? What am I to do? I am much grieved and sorrowful for thee. Permit me to proceed to Karbalá. I shall commence to war with thy opponents, and throw my head like a ball at the feet of Zú'l janáh.*

The Imám.—O lion, I am weary of life! Thy portion is not to war. Thou canst not become a martyr, nor is thy forest along the banks of a river. Go now where thou mayest find security, for to be slain in the cause of God is *my* work.

The Lion.—May I be a sacrifice for thee, O thou elect of God! If thou hast any task, please command me. As thou art always kind and generous, give me such work as thou knowest I should do.

The Imám.—Come near to me, O lion, for I am distressed with grief. Listen, as I have a request to make. When my enemies have separated my head from my body, they will proceed to trample my body under the hoofs of horses. On my sister Zainab hearing of this circumstance, her bosom will be rent with cries, and her head covered with dust. Know that she will send after you for aid. When she seeks thy assistance, delay not in proceeding towards Karbalá for the protection of the slain bodies.

The Lion.—May I be thy sacrifice! how much soever thou mayest be in distress; tell me, O king of the just, how am I to distinguish the offspring of Ahmad† among the

* See note, p. 242, vol. i.

† See note *, p. 37, vol. i.

many slain that I shall find in Karbalá? Pray therefore, O holy saint, lay me under an obligation, and show me now the dead bodies of thy friends.

The Imám.—Thy words make fresh again my old wounds. Come with me to the place of grief and calamity, and visit the plain of Karbalá. Come, that I may show thee the bodies of my slain companions, and enable thee to distinguish friends from foes. (*The Imám proceeds to the field of battle, and the lion follows.*) What am I to do, the slain are numerous? It is difficult to distinguish friends from foes. O 'Alí Akbar, the headless, say, where art thou? O youth, why art thou far from me?

The Body of 'Alí Akbar.—May I be a sacrifice for thee, O father, peace be with thee! My body is lying prostrate from oppression; oh, come, come, my father, here I am!

The Imám.—O lion, thou see'st this corpse which is without a head, it is the body of my darling son 'Alí Akbar. My beloved child has left the world without enjoying the happiness of having a bride: after his death I closed my eyes to the pleasures of this life. To the Day of Judgment I shall burn for Akbar.

The Lion.—If I shed red blood from my eyes, O master, it would be justifiable. Where is the body of thy newly married son-in-law Kásim? tell me.

The Imám.—Where art thou lying, O broken-hearted Kásim, O newly married but grievously disappointed son-in-law? Answer me, O blessed-born child. What a happy time was the hour of thy nuptials! But the enemy have made thy tree fruitless at last, and my daughter Fátimah a widow.

The Body of Kásim (*speaking to the Imám*).—O uncle, if thou wantest thy son-in-law Kásim, come. O my cypress,* if thou desirest to see the shadow of the box tree,† come. I

* See note, p. 10, vol. i.

† The Persian word "Shamshád," or "box tree," is also used to represent any tall and upright tree, and is frequently employed as a metaphor for the human figure.

am here in pieces, my body has fallen in the dust. Come for one moment, O uncle, may I be a sacrifice for thy soul!

The Imám.—Pity that such scented locks should be dishevelled and torn! Pity that such tapering fingers should be stained with blood! Pity that this flourishing tree should be cut down so ruthlessly! Pity that this blooming youth should give up his life at its commencement! Kásim will not pass from my memory till I die. O lion, this is Kásim my son-in-law.

The Lion.—O lord, if the heavens were to pass away at these deeds, it would not be out of place. Where is the body of young 'Abbás, thy standard-bearer?

The Imám (searching among the dead bodies).—I am surprised, I do not know whither to turn. Where, O my friends, is the body of the chief of my army? My back is bent by grief, my eyes covered with film. O 'Abbás, raise thy hand even as Kásim did.

The Body of 'Abbás.—O king of kings, the world is upheld by thy presence. Know that the enemy hath severed both my hands. I am on the banks of the Euphrates, but devoured by fire. As I have no hands, I am abashed in thy presence.

The Imám.—Pity, oh pity that they should have slain this lion-like warrior! Pity that this stature should be deprived of hands! After thee, the arrangements for death are ready for me. O brother dear, say, where have thy hands fallen?

The Body of 'Abbás.—Oh, whoever is slain in thy cause obtains salvation! My one hand is fallen near the bank of the Euphrates. If thy sorrowful heart should desire to know where my other hand is, thou wilt find it under the sacred head of 'Alí Akbar. If they separated my hand from my body, and my body from my head, yet may the head and body be a sacrifice for 'Alí Akbar!

The Imám (taking up 'Abbás' hands).—Pity that these hands should be severed from the body! pity that this cypress should be removed from the meadow! Although

I am full of grief, O lion, come along with me and see the body of 'Alí Asghar,* still fed on milk. Thou hadst no rest, and wert pierced by an arrow at last. O heavens, ye have done that to me which has made the universe a wilderness. May you, like my sister Zainab, become a wanderer. No one has so oppressed the descendants of a prophet. No infidel even has thus so cruelly treated any of the followers of Islám.

The Lion.—I leave thee this moment, O Imám of all mankind, to go whithersoever thou mayest be kind enough to send me.

The Imám.—Know that in the condition I am in I have griefs on every side. The sickness of 'Abid-dín is always on my mind. I am not aware whetner 'Abid's health has improved, or whether he is dead; fain would I go and raise him from the ground.

Sukainah (to Zainab).—O aunt, no one has been distressed like Sukainah. Where has my dear father gone that he has not returned? The desert of Karbalá has turned into mud with the moisture of my tears. O aunt, I have not the patience to be an orphan. Through anxiety, blood flows in place of tears. I am dying owing to the absence of my father. O aunt, separation, separation!

Zainab.—O niece, ask God to join thee to thy father. Place the Kur'án on the top of thy head, and pray. Peradventure thy father may return from his journey, for the sighs of infants are effectual.

Sukainah (placing the Kur'án on her head).—O Lord, I adjure thee, by the sighs of the fatherless children, by the tears of the wandering orphans, by the flames that overwhelm my sorrowful heart, by my tired body which has seen no rest, by the blood from the head of the brave Akbar, do not disappoint me from meeting my father. I am dying on account of this separation; where art thou, O Husain?

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* See note †, p. 11, vol. i.

The Imám (appearing).—Behold, O my afflicted child, O infant of tender years and fatherless, I am come. Do not lament, throw not the dust of sorrow on thy head. Do not consume nor complain, I am come to thee.

Sukainah.—O my honourable father, behold I am friendless, without a sympathiser, a protector, or a nurse. If I am not supported by thy kindness in this trial, I shall not be able to exist even for the twinkling of an eye!

Zainab.—Brother, say who will sympathise with my griefs after thou art gone? Thy departure will take away all my fortitude and patience. Do not consume me, O brother, with the tears caused by separation. Do not be unmindful of my miserable condition. Awn and Muhammad have passed from my possession, O Husain. In one moment I lost both these gems; henceforth the world, its riches, and the children of strangers will be of no use to me in this world. May I be sacrificed for thee, O beautiful flower! come to me, and see how in one breath my early spring has been converted into winter.

The Imám.—Do not shed tears of blood, O sister. Whatever thy God may desire will assuredly come to pass. If my body were to be cut into shreds by the edge of the sword, since it is in the cause of my sinful followers, what matter?

Sukainah.—By our Lord, O Zainab, I am a flower without a thorn; but my heart is afflicted with grief. I know this oppressive universe will make me an orphan, O aunt, and am therefore restless and unhappy. (*Zainab takes the children by the hand and comes near the Imám.*) I have no fortitude, O lord of the righteous. I am unable to hold out against much trouble. How shall I be able to nurse thy children? I am dead through grief, and can do no work; my sufferings for thee are excessive. Brother, dear, by our Lord I swear I have not the power to speak. Am I to go bare-headed to the bázár? I have not the patience to start.

The Imám.—Thou art indeed pressed sore, O dear sister; thy plaints upset me and try hard my patience. Behold,

the neck of my child Sukainah is turned aside. Leave her not, and sit near her. Go and kiss her cheeks. Do not vex her mind. Break not the heart of Husain's orphan, out of fidelity for me.

Zainab.—Why does not my long life come to an end? I am no longer able to look after orphans. I have suffered so much pain for the loss of the youths of elegant stature in the plain of Karbalá, that I have become old and blind.

The Imám.—O Zainab, these sayings should be spoken in private. My child should be considerately treated after the loss of her father. If Sukainah should distress thee very much, she is excusable as she is yet a child. Out of respect for me, prithee be kind to the poor thing, as it is necessary to reverence the light from Mount Sinai. O Bilkís,* condescend to look on my child; O Solomon, disdain not the offering of the ant.†

Zainab.—O God, let no woman suffer like Zainab, friendless, wandering, helpless, and houseless. O great Judge, let no child be fatherless. Let none of Thy created beings be placed in difficulties.

Kulsúm.—O Zainab, thou hast withered like a plant on dry soil. The flower has left the garden, and the beds are destroyed. Cast dust on your head, O miserable creatures. Has the king of religion at last passed from us?

Zainab.—How could we believe such a day would come to pass? We two sisters had six brothers. We two doves bemoan night and day. We two nightingales mourn for one rose.

The Imám.—O my family, I have an injunction to make. Praise God, O all my household, I know that ye will return to Madínah. Give my salutations to all my friends. Wherever my followers drink cool water, let them remember the dry throats of my orphans. Wherever ye

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* See note *, p. 2. † See note *, p. 226, vol. i.

may see strangers, O Shí'ahs, bring to mind the fact of myself and these children being in a strange land.

Zainab.—When thou are seated with Hasan in thy lofty place in Paradise, think of the broken-hearted Zain-ul-'Abid-dín. When thou reclinest on the pillows* of green silk to rest thyself, bear in mind the stones under the head of the orphans. When thou drinkest of the cool waters of Kausar,† bring to mind the dry throats of my orphans.

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* "They (the godly in the next life) will make use of silken carpets, litters of a prodigious size, couches, pillows, and other rich furniture embroidered with gold and precious stones."—Sale's "Koran," Prel. Disc., sec. iv. p. 99, ed. 1734.

† See note *, p. 96, vol. i.

SCENE XXII.

THE LAMENTATIONS OF HUSAIN AND HIS FAMILY FOR THE LOSS OF THE MARTYRS IN KARBALA.

In this Scene Husain and his family are depicted mourning for the martyrs who were slain at Karbalá. In the words of the text "One woman has died her garments black for the loss of her husband; another unfortunate creature smites her head, owing to the darkness of her fortune. Sukainah has rent her garment in twain; while the bride of the disappointed Kásim bewails with a loud voice. The bride moans for Kásim the bridegroom; while Sukainah grieves for 'Alí Akbar the unmarried. All the women, owing to thy oppression, O Ibn Sa'd, shed tears, and are sore at heart, lamenting the absence of their beloved ones."

Imám Husain.—The infidels are on one side, and my sorrowful self on the other. The rose has fallen in one direction, and the thorns in the other. O friends, in one quarter Akbar fell by treachery, a martyr, and in another the sickly 'Abid is lying. My son-in-law, Kásim the disappointed, has been killed on one spot, and on the other I myself experience the cruel oppression of the spheres. In one corner the mother of 'Alí Akbar is smiting her head, while the sorrowful bride of Kásim is moaning in another.

I have become a target of adversity from six causes, and find opposed to me the accursed Shimar * and the army of the infidels.

Fátimah, the bride.—I said, O Kásim my bridegroom, thou wouldest be faithful. I never anticipated so much oppression at thy hands. Thou wentest, O Kásim, and thy absence has turned my heart into blood. Hast thou dyed thy feet with the blood of my heart as it were henna? † Certainly thou hast left this known world. Why shouldest thou, therefore, have any further concern about me?

Sukainah.—O 'Alí Akbar, I shall certainly die, being separated from thee! I burn like a moth, thou art the fire. O dear brother, when in Paradise have respect for Kásim. O my beloved, he is not only a bridegroom, but also thy guest.

Fátimah, the bride.—O Kásim, I cannot forget thy love! Thou wentest before I had time to behold thee. If thou hast not the opportunity to come to me, why does not thy messenger bring me thy handwriting? Why hast thou estranged thy heart from thy fresh bride? Is this what thou callest humanity and fair dealing? *I* am left a stranger, but *thou* hast no cares, as thou hast 'Alí Akbar to associate with thee in Paradise.

Sukainah.—O 'Alí Akbar, I hold thee by the garment. In Paradise Kásim the bridegroom has become thy guest. Say to the latter, "May thy marriage in Karbalá be propitious! Why hast thou set at naught the custom of the world, and dyed thy palms with henna before even a night had passed since my death?"

Kulsúm (addressing the Imám Husain).—May I be a sacrifice for thee, O light of the eye of the Prophet! May Kulsúm be a ransom for thee, O thou afflicted and friendless being! Fátimah the bride has nearly died with weeping. Her sighs and moans have reached the highest

* See note, p. 43, vol. i.

† See note ‡, p. 118, vol. i.

heaven. Her heart is sore through separation from Kásim the bridegroom. The death of her husband has caused her to rend her garments. Tell Zainab, the afflicted and sorrowful, to comfort that grieved bride.

The Imám.—Come to me, O my dear sister Zainab, and relieve my patient boat from the tempestuous waters. For the death of Kásim the bridegroom, his bride is smiting her head in the nuptial room. Go to her relief, and tell her, O child, "Do not smite on thy head, for God is in all things the Causer of what takes place."

Zainab.—O Fátimah, do not bewail so much nor cry aloud. Decrease thy complaints against heaven, and do not weep. Thou art the nightingale of Husain's rose-garden, and have right on thy side. But do not be so distressed on account of the distance of the rose.

Fatímah, the bride.—O aunt, I am justified; say, when have I known widowhood? The tears flow from my eyes spontaneously. I have not sat with Kásim in the nuptial room, and in this field of roses I had not the opportunity to bloom as the rose. If my husband has been maliciously killed, and I am a widow, why am I dressed in my bridal garments, dear aunt?

Zainab.—Bewail not, dear niece, Kásim has escaped danger. The world has not as yet hurt his feelings. Keep thy mind happy; he is seated by the bank of the River Euphrates, and is washing his face of the dust that has settled thereon.

Sukainah.—How long am I to cry, O friends, owing to the pangs of anxiety for a brother? Oh that I could obtain some intelligence of 'Alí Akbar. If he, that free and cypress-statured youth, be slain, O Lord, where could his body have fallen?

The Imám.—Listen, O Zainab, to the voice of my young child. Go, O sister, and quiet my Sukainah. Has anyone been so oppressed as I myself through distress? Sukainah is sorrowing on one side, and the bride on the other.

Zainab (to Sukainah).—Dear niece, why hast thou laid

bare thy bosom like the morning, and rested thy head on thy knee like one in thought? Dear niece, do not freshen the soreness of my heart, however much, beloved of my soul, thou mayest be justified in so doing. Do not complain, dear one, of the oppression of the world; thou hast always paid attention to my sayings.

Fatimah, the bride.—It is a hard case when one is friendless and helpless, but worse than either is the pain of being disconsolate without a husband. I am houseless and desolate away from Kásim. I wish some kind Musulmán would give me some news of Kásim.

Zainab.—Come, O mother of Akbar, and kindly help me. I am alone and fatigued; come and relieve me. These two children are sorrowing, owing to their separation from Akbar and Kásim. I do not know whether to comfort that one or this. By groaning and grief these infants have nearly perished. Both are wailing, one on either side of me.

The Mother of 'Alí Akbar.—O my beloved children, why do you melt like lighted candles? O you two lovely trees, why are you so prostrate in the mud? Do not cry so much, the time for lamentation will come hereafter. O daughter, this is the beginning of our troubles. We are only in the first stage.

Sukainah (to her mother).—O my sorrowful mother, why should I not rend my garments, as my head is troubled, desirous of seeing my brother.

Fátimah, the bride.—O my sorrowful mother, by the Lord I swear I cannot for one moment refrain from grieving for Kásim the bridegroom.

The Mother of 'Alí Akbar.—In this dilemma, what can I do for you, dear children? Alas! how am I to act? Where am I to carry my complaint?

Sukainah.—If I could get any tidings, O mother, of the place where the tall stature of Akbar fell! Oh! if I could only obtain intelligence of him, I would rest patiently under my bereavement.

Fátimah, the bride.—If it be thy intention, O mother, to relieve me, give me some intelligence of Kásim my bridegroom.

The Mother of 'Alí Akbar.—O Sukainah, O Fátimah, O light of my tearful eyes, where can I find any person to give me intelligence of our beloved ones? The world is become dark in my eyes, and there is no light. Where shall I meet with any person to go and obtain tidings?

Sukainah.—O Fátimah, arise! we are in grief and sorrow; and as we are bereaved, let us together bewail our loss.

Fátimah, the bride.—Put thy hand in mine, O sister. Let us go to the wilderness together, O beloved Sukainah.

Sukainah and Fátimah (together).—Let us weep like strangers, since we are afflicted, sometimes inquiring for Kásim, and sometimes for Akbar.

Sukainah.—O my brave Akbar, O moonlike sun! I shall die of grief for thee, O beloved brother!

Fátimah, the bride.—O Kásim, why hast thou withdrawn thy garment from me? Probably thou didst hear some harsh word from thy new spouse.

Sukainah and Fátimah (together).—We two poor sisters have sorrow for our lot. We two poor strangers, alas! how sad is our fate!

Shahrbánú (mother of 'Alí Akbar).*—O my poor daughters! do not bewail any more. I have neither Akbar nor Asghar.

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* "Harreith the son of Jauber the Haneifite, while employed under the authority of the Khalif Ally in the government of one of the eastern provinces of the empire, by some means or other got into his power two of the daughters of the unfortunate Yezdejird, whom he immediately despatched to the court of his sovereign. Of these the name of one was Sheherbaunú, who was bestowed on Imaum Husseyne. . . . The offspring was Zeyn ulaubedein, who accordingly claims descent from the monarchs of the house of Sassan."—Price's "Chronological Retrospect of Mahommedan History," vol. i. p. 371, ed. 1811.

Ibn Sa'd (to Khaulí).—Why do the women of the haram weep so incessantly, smite their heads, and lament without restraint? Has any fresh occurrence taken place, that the children shed tears like rain? On every side I hear the voice of lamentation. North, south, east, and west, I see everyone weeping.

Khaulí (to Ibn Sa'd).—Know, O Amír, that the women who are thus weeping consist of the family of the Lord of Bat-há,* and they are shedding tears like rain. One woman has dyed her garments black for the loss of her husband; another unfortunate creature smites her head, owing to the darkness of her fortune. Sukainah has rent her garment in twain; while the bride of the disappointed Kásim bewails with a loud voice. The bride moans for Kásim the bridegroom; while Sukainah grieves for 'Alí Akbar the unmarried. All the women, owing to thy oppression, O Ibn Sa'd, shed tears, and are sore at heart, lamenting the absence of their beloved ones.

Ibn Sa'd.—These groanings are not sufficient to gladden my heart. I shall this day do things to surpass Shidád.† Bring to me, O ye tyrannical people, the weapons and garments which are on the bodies of Kásim and Akbar.

Khaulí (bringing a shirt).—Of those who have died from calamity, thou see'st in my hand what has fallen to my lot. I do not hide from thee, O Amír, these are the two shirts.

Ibn Sa'd.—Speak, O ye soldiers of Shám,‡ whoever knows best. I would like to ascertain to what Joseph did this shirt belong?

Khaulí.—Of these two shirts, the one that is stiff with gold and is full of slits and rents from daggers and arrows —I mean that the shirt which is stiff with blood, O Amír, belongs to 'Alí Akbar, the offspring of the Prophet. The

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* See note †, p. 182, vol. i.

† See note *, p. 50.

‡ Syria.

other, which is stained with blood in the corners, is the wedding garment of the son-in-law of the Sháh of Karbalá.

'Ashísh (bringing a cap).—O chief! as 'Alí Akbar came towards the field of battle, I went maliciously and waylaid him. When the edge of the sword struck on his head, at the same moment I took away his cap from behind.

Ibn Sa'd.—I cannot understand, alas! what benefit there is in this world. Is not Akbar's mother dead?

Khaulí.—May God grant that thou mayest be seated on the throne of grace as long as the world continues! These black locks which thou see'st in my hand, O Amír, are two perfumed ringlets, one belonging to Kásim and the other to 'Alí Akbar.

Ibn Sa'd.—Make known to me, O cruel and tyrannical man, which ringlet pertained to Kásim and which to 'Alí Akbar?

Khaulí.—The ringlet which thou see'st long and black belongs to poor innocent Akbar. This other lock in rolls and curls pertains to the troubled and afflicted Kásim.

'Ashísh (bringing a shield).—O Amír, O originator of confusion and mischief, the trophies which I have gained in this undertaking are these shields which my hands have taken, as my heart possesses the properties of iron. This shield pertained to the memorable Kásim, and this other to Alí Akbar.

Khaulí.—O Amír, who art at enmity with the tribe of the cloak,* my share in these transactions consists of these two coats. The green garment appertains to the unhappy Akbar; the red coat is Kásim's, the new bridegroom.

Ibn Sa'd.—Come, O Khaulí, thou follower of a perfidious dog, take up the clothing and arms of the young Akbar, and show them, one by one, to his sister, that her afflicted

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* See note †, p. 98, vol. i.

soul may inhale the scent of her brother. Take them with exultation, and let her heart burn with the intelligence of her lost Akbar.

Khaulí (taking up the articles).—I am he whom God has chosen to make an oppressor in this world. I am he who has not a grain of mercy in his disposition towards the world. I will dissolve Sukainah's heart to water through malice. With malignity I shall roast that game of the haram.

Ibn Sa'd.—O 'Ashísh, bring forward the clothing and apparel of Kásim the bridegroom, and carry them to the bride, saying, "May your rejoicings be propitious!" Place these articles of sorrow afresh before her weeping eyes, and if she make inquiries respecting Kásim, tell her all thou knowest about him.

'Ashísh.—I am he whose employment is to be oppressive, to raise enmity and to foster quarrels. It is my business to hate 'Alí and his household. The fresh bride will be shown with rage the locks of Kásim the bridegroom, to her I will also relate the particulars of his fate.

Khaulí.—O Sukainah, for one moment lift up thy head from the dust of the ground, and look towards me, as I have news of 'Alí Akbar. Come, for either to-day or to-morrow 'Alí Akbar will return from his journey.

'Ashísh.—O bride of Kásim, the friendless, cease thy cries; come, as I have news of the rose of thy garden. O daughter-in-law of Hasan, if thou art the Queen Bilkís,* listen to the history of Solomon from the lapwing. If the light of thine eyes has passed from thy sight, I have a shirt which belonged to thy beloved Canaan.

Sukainah and Fátimah.—What a wonderful morning has succeeded to the night of separation! Glad tidings of the garment of Joseph have been brought to Canaan. Thanks to God, a messenger has arrived from the martyrs. The

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* See note *, p. 2, vol. ii., and p. 143, vol. i.

lapwing, unannounced, has arrived from the city of Solomon. Praise to God, Kásim has come from the field of battle to protect Fátimah the helpless and houseless.

Sukainah.—O youth, relate to me some anecdote of the rose and the garden. Tell me such news as thou mayest have of 'Alí Akbar.

Fátimah.—O horseman, relate something fresh about my fir tree. If thou hast any news of the bridegroom, repeat it.

Khaulí (*showing the cap*).—O Sukainah, poor fowl of the garden of Karbalá, thou art featherless. Put dust on thy head at once, as thou art without 'Alí Akbar. O miserable creature, thou art brotherless. Scatter dust on thy head and look towards me; this cap is a token of the head of Akbar.

Sukainah (*taking up the cap*).—O dear brother, may I become a sacrifice for thy moon-like* face! Would to God that I might be a ransom for thy cap! May the life of Sukainah be sacrificed for thy crown! They have at last maliciously carried off thy cap from thine head.

'Ashísh (*giving a shirt*).—Thy Kásim has withered, O Fátimah, like his garden! I have just taken off this shirt from his body.

Fátimah, the bride (*taking up the shirt*).—At last thy shirt has become saturated with blood, O Kásim! May Fátimah become a sacrifice for thy white neck!

Khaulí (*giving a shirt*).—O Sukainah, the body of thy Akbar is exposed. Thy Joseph has been worried by a wolf, and this is his shirt.

Sukainah.—O Akbar, the blast of oppression has turned thy spring into winter, since I see thy shirt stained with blood at the skirts.

Khaulí (*showing a lock of hair*).—If thy heart desire to

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* See note, p. 7, vol. i.

see the moon-like face of Akbar, look in the palm of my hand and behold his black locks.

Sukainah.—Give me the ringlet, O man, that I may smell it. What remains of life I will sacrifice for this ringlet.

'Ashísh (showing a lock of hair to Fátimah).—O bride of Kásim the bridegroom, if thou art afflicted, grieve, and behold the locks of Kásim; they still retain the stain of henna.

Fátimah, the bride.—Give me the locks of Kásim, O man, that I may smell them, and wash them with the tears of my eyes.

Sukainah.—O accursed! do not remove from me those amber-perfumed locks. I am afflicted, do not keep far from me those precious hairs. (*They throw down the ringlets.*) O 'Alí Akbar, thy sister is afflicted with grief for thy ringlets. Where art thou, O brother? I smell thee from these locks of hair.

Fátimah (taking up the locks of hair).—O bridegroom, thy body has fallen in the dust of Karbalá. A knot is found in thy hair at last, without cause.

Khaulí (showing 'Alí Akbar's head).—Is this the head of Akbar? Look at his resplendent face. Behold how dull and heavy are his expressive eyes!

'Ashísh (showing the head of Kásim).—This is the head of Kásim, O Fátimah; look at it, and see how secretly his moles* and moustaches ravish the heart.

Sukainah.—Thou art gone, O brother, and I am dying for thee. May my whole body be a sacrifice for thee! Thou hast departed from amongst us, and I am perishing because thou art absent. I find I have lost the shadow of thy beautiful stature. Thou wentest forth, and said thou wouldest return from thy trip on the morrow. My soul

* A mole is a type of beauty in the East.

will quit my body now I find thou hast not kept thy promise.

The Imám.—Go, O Zainab, thou hast had troubles in this world! tell those two unfortunate creatures who are houseless, to cease wailing and lamenting. How long will they continue? It is enough of this incessant weeping and wailing. Do not increase the pains and anguish of Husain, who is harassed enough by the taunts of his enemies.

Zainab (to Sukainah and Fátimah).—O two lights of my eyes, do not wail so much with your incessant lamentations. Do not turn your hearts into blood with sighs and groans, nor increase the pains of your father Husain.

Sukainah.—Thy words, O aunt, afflicted with sorrow, cannot heal the heart of those who have lost their beloved. By thy help, O women, gladden my heart for one moment, that I may behold the body of the bridegroom. Like mourners, throw the dust of sorrow on your heads. Bring to me the horses of Kásim and Akbar. (*They bring the horses.*) Come, O bride of Kásim, with sorrowful heart, come to the help of thy sister Sukainah.

Fátimah.—Tell me, O sister, what I can do for thee, that I may know how to help thee, O afflicted and helpless woman.

Sukainah.—O sister, bring here in haste the coats of poor Kásim and Akbar.

Fátimah (bringing the coats).—Take these coats from me, O spinster; this coat is Kásim's, and the other Akbar's.

Sukainah.—Bring me two bunches of roses, O sister, that I may place one on the grave of Kásim, and the other on the tomb of Akbar.

Fátimah (bringing two bunches of roses).—Take these two bunches of roses from my hand, O sister. May I be sacrificed to the graves of Kásim and Akbar!

Sukainah (to Fátimah).—Bring me also two candles, O my sister, that I may light one on the grave of Kásim and the other on that of Akbar.

Fátimah (*bringing candles*).—May I be sacrificed to thy grave, O my brother! Dear sister, take these lighted candles from my hand.

Sukainah.—The grief of the world, O Lord, has brought my existence to an end. Fetch me, O my sister, the shields of the two young men.

Fátimah (*bringing the shields*).—Where, O heaven, hast thou cast my Kásim? Take, dear sister, the shields of the two young men.

Sukainah.—The absence of the young men compels me to shed blood from my sorrowful eyes. Bring to me, O my sister, the turbans of the two young men.

Fátimah.—The heavens have punished me by rending my Joseph. Take the two turbans of the young men, O beloved sister.

Sukainah.—Go and bring me a black flag, dear sister; one for Kásim; and another for 'Alí Akbar.

The Bride (*bringing black flags*).—O heaven, why hast thou caused the enemy to rejoice over us? O dear sister, take these black flags from me.

Sukainah (*proceeding towards the field of slaughter*).—O ye people of the haram, the occasion for wailing has arrived. The time for proceeding to the graves is at hand. Kásim has become headless by the edge of the oppressive sword. The period for the marriage * of 'Alí Akbar has come.

Shahrbánú (*after the women have left*).—I am degraded among my people, and disrespected. Having no son,† I am not esteemed. Friendless and destitute, wherever I go I am of no account. I have lost my son, and am in a strange city. I expected you, O Kulsúm and Zainab, to be considerate towards me in the day of my adversity.

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* When persons die unmarried, their funerals are ironically termed "marriages."

† Marriage is regarded in the East as incumbent upon all men, and it is considered a disgrace for a person to die and leave no male posterity.

Zainab.—O Shahrbánú, thou turnest thy dark days into night. What causes thee to complain of Kulsúm and Zainab? When have not we done for thee what thy position required? O mother of Akbar, how have we disrespected thee? These women of the camp, O sister, are thy slaves. The whole of them, as thou see'st them now, are mourning for thy dear ones.

Shahrbánú.—If, O friends, you have love and fidelity, why have you left Shahrbánú thus alone? For want of companions she will at last die. I am a stranger, and my Asghar is lying in the dust; no one in this strange city will protect me, and enable me to carry my 'Alí Asghar near my 'Alí Akbar.

Zainab.—May the life of Zainab be sacrificed for thy unhappy soul! Come, O mother of Asghar, we will help thee. Although we are powerless, helpless, and miserable, we will carry the body of Asghar to that of Akbar with all respect.

Shahrbánú.—My misery cannot be remedied, as my illness is incurable. I can find no respect or regard for my dead. What sucking-child has been nourished on blood? Where may I find a winding-sheet for 'Alí Asghar, and where a coffin?

Zainab.—We will aid in finding something for that sweet, dear child. The sacred garment of Akbar shall be turned into his shroud. Cut off a portion of the same, and tie up the eyes of Asghar, O unhappy Shahrbánú.

Shahrbánú (*binding up 'Alí Asghar's eyes*).—I tie up thy eyes with my own hands for want of anyone to help me. Shahrbánú is friendless, O beloved one. Zainab, put on something black on thy head, for 'Alí Asghar is dead. Think of arranging a coffin for the sweet youth.

Zainab (*bringing the child's cradle*).—O Asghar,* as instead of milk thou hast had to be nourished on blood, I have brought a cradle and will make it thy coffin. O 'Alí Asghar, may I be a sacrifice for thy severed throat! O

* See note, p. 174, vol. i.

my beloved, thy cradle has become at last thy coffin! O my 'Alí Asghar, thou hast experienced sufficient trouble in this desert. Thou hast no friend, O aunt; I lament also for want of companions.

Shahrbánú.—Come, O sorrowful Zainab, and, for my sake, dye a flag black for 'Alí Asghar. Bring candles, and prepare a tray for festivity.* Come and comfort my little child with your love. My darling is going on a journey; show him respect. He is going to his brother; behave kindly to him.

Zainab (bringing a black flag and a tray).—O 'Alí Asghar, if I give my life for thee, it would not be sufficient. My sighs for thy loss are conveyed to heaven on this flag. With sighs and moans I am making preparations for thee. With tears and earth I am dyeing black thy flag. O women, place Asghar's bier on your shoulders; lift up 'Alí Asghar's body from the ground. Come, Sukainah, thou and I will chaunt the funeral song; thou in grief for 'Alí Akbar, and I for 'Alí Asghar.

Sukainah and Fátimah (chaunting).—O dear brother, 'Alí Akbar the brave, O disappointed youth, O beloved brother!

Zainab and Shahrbánú (together).—'Alí Asghar the martyred! O beloved, O beloved! O disappointed infant! O beloved, O beloved!

Fátimah, the bride (to the body of Kásim).—Thou art at rest, O son of my uncle; may peace be on thee!

The Body of Kásim.—O my destitute and wailing bride, peace be on thee! Thou who art troubled and afflicted owing to my absence, on thee be peace!

Sukainah (to the body of 'Alí Akbar).—O my sorrowful 'Alí Akbar, peace be with thee! O dear brother, O houseless rose, peace be on thee!

The Body of 'Alí Akbar.—O Sukainah, my afflicted sister, on thee be peace! O my miserable and destitute sister, on thee be peace!

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* Mourning festivity.

The Body of Kásim.—I hear thy voice, O my bride. Thou art welcome! May my head be thy footstool!

The Body of 'Ali Akbar.—O Sukainah, thou hast lost sight of thy Akbar, and indulged in festivities after my death.

Sukainah.—The circumstances of the festivities, dear brother, are not such as may be heard. Thy place is vacant in the merrymaking.

Fátimah, the bride.—O Kásim, thy bride wishes thee to speak and hear. Tell me, O Kásim, what converse thou hast had with 'Alí Akbar.

The Body of Kásim.—Sukainah sighs and wails over the head of Akbar. Listen how Akbar reproaches me.

Fátimah, the bride (to the body of Kásim).—To the Day of Resurrection, O Kásim, I shall remain thy widow. O my youthful bridegroom, where is the henna on thy hands?

The Body of Kásim.—See how red my hands are, in place of henna, from the blood of my head! But to the Day of Resurrection I shall be abashed before Akbar.

The Body of 'Alí Akbar.—O all ye women who are widowed, sing mournfully for me, but joyfully for Kásim the bridegroom.

Shahrbánú and Kulsúm.—May I be sacrificed for thee, O Akbar! Thou hast wet thy hair at last with blood. At length the throat of Asghar has been severed. A malicious arrow at last has reached his dry palate.

Sukainah and Fátimah (together).—While alone at Madínah we did not get thee married, O beloved; we were unaware that the sword of the enemy would cut thee off unexpectedly.

Imám Husain (to his family).—O women of my camp, you have bewailed enough. O ye daughters of the chosen, you have distressed yourselves sufficiently; cease your cries, and return towards the tents. You have visited your friends, rest content.

SCENE XXIII.

MARTYRDOM OF HUSAIN.

HUSAIN was slain on the field of Karbalá on 9th October, A.D. 680. "On the morning of the fatal day he mounted on horseback, with his sword in one hand and the Koran in the other; his generous band of martyrs consisted only of thirty-two horse and forty foot, but their flanks and rear were secured by the tent ropes, and by a deep trench which they had filled with lighted faggots, according to the practice of the Arabs. The enemy advanced with reluctance; and one of their chiefs deserted, with thirty followers, to claim the partnership of inevitable death. In every close onset or single combat the despair of the Fatimites was invincible; but the surrounding multitudes galled them from a distance with a cloud of arrows, and the horses and men were successively slain. A truce was allowed on both sides for the hour of prayer; and the battle at length expired by the death of the last of the companions of Hosein. Alone, weary, and wounded, he seated himself at the door of his tent. As he tasted a drop of water, he was pierced in the mouth with a dart; and his son and nephew, two beautiful youths, were killed in his arms. He lifted his hands to heaven—they were full of blood—and he uttered a funeral prayer for the living and the dead. In a transport of despair his sister issued from the tent, and adjured the general of the Cufians that he would not suffer Hosein to be murdered before his eyes; a tear trickled down his venerable beard, and the boldest of his soldiers fell back on every side as the dying hero threw himself among them. The remorseless Shamer—a name detested by the faithful—reproached their cowardice; and the grandson of Mahomet was slain with three and thirty strokes of lances and swords. After they had trampled on his body, they carried his head to the castle of Çufa, and the inhuman Obeidollah struck him on the mouth with a cane.

'Alas!' exclaimed an aged Musulman, 'on these lips have I seen the lips of the Apostle of God!' In a distant age and climate the tragic scene of the death of Hosein will awaken the sympathy of the coldest reader."—Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," vol. ix. chap. L. p. 341, Milman ed. 1838.

Husain.—I am sore distressed at the unkind treatment received at the hands of the cruel heavens. Pitiful tyranny is exercised towards me by a cruel, unbelieving army! All the sorrows and troubles of this world have overwhelmed me! I am become a butt for the arrow of affliction and trouble. I am a holy bird stript of its quills and feathers by the hand of the archer of tyranny, and am become, O friends, utterly disabled, and unable to fly to my sacred nest. They are going to kill me mercilessly, for no other crime or guilt except that I happen to be a prophet's grandson.

Shimar * (*challenging him*).—O Husain, why dost thou not appear in the field? Why dost not thy majesty show thy face in battle? How long art thou going to sit still without displaying thy valour in war? Why dost thou not put on thy robe of martyrdom and come forth? If thou art indeed so magnanimous as not to fear death, if thou carest not about the whistling sounds of the arrows when let fly from the bow, mount thou, quickly, thy swift horse named Zú'l janáh,† and deliver thy soul from so many troubles. Yea, come to the field of battle, be it as it may. Enter soon among thy women, and with tears bid them a last farewell; then come forth to war, and show us thy great fortitude.

Husain (*talking to himself*).—Although the accursed fellow, Shimar, will put me to death in an hour's time, yet the reproachful language of the enemy seems to be worse than destruction itself. It is better that the foe

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* See note, p. 43, vol. i.

† See note, p. 242, vol. i.

should sever my head cruelly from the body, than make me hear these abusive words. What can I do? I have no one left to help me, no Kásim to hold my stirrup for a minute when about to mount. All are gone! Look around if thou canst find anyone to defend the descendant of Muhammad, the chosen of God—if thou canst see any ready to assist the holy family of God's Prophet! In this land of trials there is no kind protector to have compassion on the household of the Apostle of God, and befriend them.

Zainab.—May I be offered for the sad tones of thy voice, dear brother! Time has thrown on my head the black earth of sorrow. It has grieved me to the quick. Wait, brother, do not go till thy Kásim arrives. Have patience for a minute, my 'Alí Akbar is coming.

Husain (looking around).—Is there one who wishes to please God, his Maker? Is there any willing to behave faithfully towards his real friends? Is there a person ready to give up his life for our sake, to save us, to defend us in this dreadful struggle of Karbalá?

Zainab.—O Lord, Zainab's brother has no one to assist or support him! Occasions of his sorrows are innumerable, without anyone to sympathise with him in the least? Sad and desolate, he is leaning on his spear! He has bent his neck in a calamitous manner; he has no famous 'Alí Akbar, no renowned 'Abbás any more!

Husain.—Is there anyone to pity our condition, to help us in this terrible conflict of Karbalá? Is there a kind soul to give us a hand of assistance for God's sake?

Zainab.—Brave cavalier of Karbalá, it is not fitting for thee to be so hurried. Go a little more slowly; troubles will come quickly enough. Didst thou ever say thou hadst a Zainab in the tent? Is not this poor creature weeping and mourning for thee?

The Imam Husain.—Dear sister, thou rest of my disquieted, broken heart, smite on thy head and mourn, thou thousand-noted nightingale. To-day I shall be killed by

the ignoble Shimar. To-day shall the rose be turned out of its delightful spot by the tyranny of the thistle. Dear sister, if any dust happen to settle on the rosy cheeks of my lovely daughter Sukainah, be pleased to wash it away most tenderly with the rose-water of thy tears. My daughter has been accustomed to sit always in the dear lap of her father whenever she wished to rest; for my sake, receive and caress her in thy bosom.

Zainab.—O thou intimate friend of this assembly of poor afflicted strangers, the flaming effect of thy speech has left no rest in my mind. Tell me, what have we done that thou shouldest so reward us? Who is the criminal among us for whose sake we must suffer thus? Take us back, brother, to Madínah, to the sacred monument * of our noble grandfather; let us go home, and live like queens in our own country.

Husain.—O my afflicted, distressed, tormented sister, would to God there were a way of escape for me! Notwithstanding they have cruelly cut down the cypress-like † stature of my dear son 'Alí Akbar; notwithstanding Kásim my lovely nephew tinged himself with his own blood; still they are intent to kill me also. They do not allow me to go back from 'Irák, nor do they let me turn

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* "The holy tomb (may the blessings of God and peace be upon its occupant!) lies to the south-east of the sublime mosque. Its appearance is admirable and cannot be precisely described. It is covered with marble of a superior quality and exquisitely carved. Its surface is worn away by the friction with musk and other perfumes which has been in vogue for a very long time. On its southern face there is a silver nail, which is opposite the noble figure (of Mahomet). Here the public halt for their salutations, turning towards the noble countenance, and having the kiblah behind them. After the salutation they turn to the face of Abu Bakr, the truthful, whose head is close to the Prophet's feet. After him, to that of Omar, son of Alkhatthâb, whose head rests on Abu Bakr's shoulders."—Translated from the "Voyages d'Ibn Batoutah," vol. i. p. 263, ed. 1853.

† See note, p. 10, vol. i.

elsewhere. They will neither permit me to go to India, nor the capital of China. I cannot set out for the territory of Abyssinia, or take refuge in Zanzibar.

Zainab.—Oh, how am I vexed in my mind, dear brother, on hearing these sad things! May I die, rather than listen to such affecting words any more! What shall we, an assembly of desolate widows and orphans, do after thou art gone? Oh! how can we live?

Husain.—O miserable creature, weep not now, nor be so very much upset; thou shalt cry plentifully hereafter, owing to the wickedness of time. When the wicked Shimar shall sever my head from the body; when thou shalt be made a captive prisoner, and forced to ride on an unsaddled camel; when my body shall be trampled under foot by the enemy's horses, and trodden under their hoofs; when my beloved Sukainah shall be cruelly struck by Shimar, my wicked murderer; when they shall lead thee away captive from Karbalá to Shám; * and when they shall make thee and others live there in a horrible, ruined place; yea, when thou shalt see all this, then thou mayest, and verily wilt, cry. But I admonish thee, sister, since this sad case has no remedy but patience, to resign the whole matter, submissively, to the Lord, the good Maker of all! Mourn not for my misfortune, but bear it patiently, without giving occasion to the enemy to rejoice triumphantly on this account, or speak reproachfully concerning us.

Kulsúm.—Thou struttest about gaily, O Husain, thou beloved of my heart. Look a little behind thee; see how Kulsúm is sighing after thee with tearful eyes! I am strewing pearls in thy way, precious jewels from the sea of my eyes! Let me put my head on the hoof of thy winged steed, Zú'l janáh.

Husain.—Beloved sister, kindle not a fire in my heart by so doing. Take away thy head from under the hoof of

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* Syria.

my steed. O thousand-noted nightingale, sing not such a sad-toned melody. I am going away; be thou the kind keeper of my helpless ones.

Kulsúm.—Behold what the heavens have at length brought on me! what they have done also to my brother! Him they have made to have parched lips through thirst, and me they have caused to melt into water, and gush out like tears from the eyes! Harsh severity is mingled with tyrannous cruelty.

Husain.—Trials, afflictions, and pains, the thicker they fall on man, the better, dear sister, do they prepare him for his journey heavenward. We rejoice in tribulations, seeing they are but temporary, and yet they work out an eternal and blissful end. Though it is predestined that I should suffer martyrdom in this shameful manner, yet the treasury of everlasting happiness shall be at my disposal as a consequent reward. Thou must think of that, and be no longer sorry. The dust raised in the field of such battles is as highly esteemed by me, O sister, as the philosopher's stone was, in former times, by the alchemists; and the soil of Karbalá is the sure remedy of my inward pains.

Kulsúm.—May I be sacrificed for thee! Since this occurrence is thus inevitable, I pray thee describe to thy poor sister Kulsúm her duty after thy death. Tell me, where shall I go, or in what direction set my face? What am I to do? and which of thy orphan children am I to caress most?

Husain.—Show thy utmost kindness, good sister, to Sukainah, my darling girl, for the pain of being fatherless is most severely felt by children too much fondled by their parents, especially girls. I have regard to all my children, to be sure, but I love Sukainah most.

An old Female Slave of Husain's mother.—Dignified master, I am sick and weary in heart at the bare idea of separation from thee. Have a kind regard to me, an old slave, much stricken with age! Master, by thy soul do

I swear that I am altogether weary of life. I have grown old in thy service; pardon me, please, all the faults ever committed by me.

Husain.—Yes, thou hast served us, indeed, for a very long time. Thou hast shown much affection and love toward me and my children, O handmaid of my dear mother Fátimah; thou hast verily suffered much in our house: how often didst thou grind corn with thine own hand for my mother! Thou hast also dandled Husain most caressingly in thy arms. Thou art black-faced, that is true, but thou hast, I opine, a pure white heart, and art much esteemed by us. To-day I am about to leave thee, owing thee, at the same time, innumerable thanks for the good services thou hast performed; but I beg thy pardon for all inconsiderate actions on my part.

The Maid.—May I be a sacrifice for thee, thou royal ruler of the capital of faith! turn not my days black, like my face, thou benevolent master. Truly I have had many troubles on thy behalf. How many nights have I spent in watchfulness at thy cradle! At one moment I would caress thee in my arms, at another I would fondle thee in my bosom. I became prematurely old by my diligent service, O Husain! Is it proper now that thou shouldst put round my poor neck the heavy chain of thy intolerable absence? Is this, dear master, the reward of the services I have done thee?

Husain.—Though thy body, O maid, is now broken down by age and infirmity, yet thou hast served us all the days of thy life with sincerity and love; thou must know, therefore, that thy diligence and vigilance will never be disregarded by us. Excuse me to-day, when I am offering my body and soul in the cause of God, and cannot help thee at all; but be sure I will fully pay the reward of thy services in the day of universal account.

The Maid.—Dost thou remember, good sir, how many troubles I have suffered with thee for the dear sake of 'Alí Akbar, the light of thine eyes? Though I have not

suckled him with my own breasts, to be sure, yet I laboured hard for him till he reached the age of eighteen years and came here to Karbalá. But, alas! dear flourishing 'Alí Akbar has been this day cruelly killed—what a pity! and I strove so much for his sake, yet all, as it were, in vain. Yea, what a sad loss!

Husain.—Speak not of my 'Alí Akbar any more, O maiden, nor set fire to the granary of my patience and make it flame. (*Turning to his sister.*) Poor distressed Zainab, have the goodness to be kind always to my mother's old maid, for she has experienced many troubles in our family; she has laboured hard in training 'Alí Akbar my son.

Umm Lailah (*the mother of 'Alí Akbar*).—The elegant stature of my Akbar fell on the ground; like as a beautiful cypress tree it was forcibly felled! Alas for the memory of thy upright stature! Alas, O my youthful son of handsome form and appearance! Alas my troubles at night-time for thee! How often did I watch thy bed, singing lullabies for thee until the morning! How sweet is the memory of those times! yea, how pleasant the very thought of those days! Alas! where art thou now, dear child? O thou who art ever remembered by me, come and see thy mother's wretched condition, come!

Husain.—O Lord, why is this mournful voice so affecting? Methinks the owner of it, the bemoaning person, has a flame in her heart. It resembles the doleful tone of a lapwing* whose wings are burned! like as when a miraculous lapwing, the companion of Solomon the wise, the king of God's holy people, received intelligence suddenly about the death of its royal guardian!

Umm Lailah.—Again I am put in mind of my dear son! O my heart, melted into blood, pour thyself forth! Dear son, whilst thou wast alive, I had some

* See Sale's "Koran," chap. xxvii. pp. 310 and 311, ed. 1734.

honour and respect, everybody had some regard for me; but since thou art gone, I am altogether abandoned. Woe be to me! woe be to me! I am despised and rejected. Woe unto me! woe unto me!*

Husain.—Do not set fire to the harvest of my soul any further. Husain is, before God, greatly ashamed of his shortcomings towards thee. Come out from the tent, for it is the last meeting previous to separating from one another for ever; thy distress is an additional weight to the heavy burden of my grief.

The Mother of 'Alí Akbar.—I humbly state it, O glory of all ages, that I did not expect from thy saintship that thou wouldest disregard thy handmaid in such a way. Thou dost show thy kind regard and favour to all except me. Dost thou not remember my sincere services done to thee? Am I not by birth a descendant of the glorious kings of Persia, brought as a captive to Arabia† when the former empire fell and gave place to the new-born monarchy of the latter kingdom? The Judge, the living Creator, was pleased to grant me an offspring, whom we called 'Alí Akbar, this day lost to us for ever. May I be offered for thee! While 'Alí Akbar my son was alive, I had indeed a sort of esteem and credit with thee; but now that my cypress, my newly-sprung-up cedar, is unjustly felled, I have fallen from credit too, and must therefore shed tears.

Husain.—Be it known unto thee, O thou violet of the flower-garden of modesty, that thou art altogether mistaken. I swear by the holy enlightened dust of my mother Zahrah's‡ grave, that thou art more honourable and dearer now than ever. I well remember the affectionate recommendations of 'Alí Akbar, our son, concerning thee. How much he was mindful of thee at the moment

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* See note †, p. 77. † See note, p. 70.

‡ See note, p. 22, vol. i.

of his parting! How tenderly he cared for thee, and spoke concerning thee to every one of the family!

'Alí Akbar's Mother.—O gracious Lord, I adjure thee, by the merit of my son 'Alí Akbar, never to lessen the shadow of Husain from over my head. May no one ever be in my miserable condition—never be a desolate, homeless woman, like me!

Husain.—O thou unfortunate Zainab, my sister, the hour of separation is come! The day of joy is gone for ever! the night of affliction has drawn near! Drooping, withering sister, yet most blest in thy temper, I have a request from thee which I fear to make known.

Zainab.—May I be a sacrifice for thy heart, thou moon-faced,* glorious sun! there is nobody here, if thou hast a private matter to disclose to thy sister.

Husain.—Dear unfortunate sister, who art already severely vexed in heart, if I tell thee what my request is, what will be thy condition then? Though I cannot restrain myself from speaking, still I am in doubt as to which is better, to speak, or to forbear.

Zainab.—My breast is pierced! My heart boils within me like a caldron, owing to this thy conversation. Thou soul of thy sister, hold not back from Zainab what thou hast in thy mind.

Husain.—My poor sister, I am covered with shame before thee, I cannot lift up my head. Though the request is a trifle, yet I know it is grievous to thee to grant. It is this; bring me an old, dirty, ragged garment to put on. But do not ask me, I pray thee, the reason why, until I myself think it proper to tell thee.

Zainab.—I am now going to the tent to fetch thee what thou seekest; but I am utterly astonished, brother, as to why thou dost want this loathsome thing. (*Returning with*

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* See note, p. 7, vol. i.

a tattered shirt.) Take it, here is the ragged robe for which thou didst ask. I wonder what thou wilt do with it.

Husain.—Do not remain here, dear sister. Go for awhile to thine own tent; for if thou see that which I am about to do, thou wilt be grievously disturbed. Turn to thy tent, poor miserable sister, listen to what I say, and leave me, I pray thee, alone.

Zainab (*going away*).—I am gone, but I am sorry I cannot tell what this enigma means. It is puzzling indeed! Remain thou with thy mysterious coat, O Husain! May all of us be offered as a ransom for thee, dear brother! Thou art without any to assist or befriend thee! Thou art surrounded by the wicked enemy! Yes, thy kind helpers have all been killed by the unbelieving nation!

Husain (*putting on the garment*).—The term of life has no perpetual duration in itself. Who ever saw in a flower-garden a rose without its thorn! I will put on this old robe close to my skin, and place over it my new apparel, though neither the old nor the new of this world can be depended on. I hope Zainab has not been observing what I have been doing, for, poor creature, she can scarcely bear the sight of any such like thing.

Zainab.—Alas! I do not know what is the matter with Husain, my brother. What has an old garment to do with being a king? Dost thou desire, O Husain, that the enemy should come to know this thing and reproach thy sister about it? Put off, I pray thee, this old ragged garment, otherwise I shall pull off my head-dress, and uncover my head for shame.*

Husain.—Rend not thy dress, modest sister, nor pull off thy head-covering. There is a mystery involved in my action. Know that what Husain has done has a good

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* For a woman to pull off her head-dress and uncover her head, betokens that she is so distracted as to be indifferent to all ideas of modesty and propriety.

meaning in it. His putting on an old garment is not without its signification.

Zainab.—What mystery can be in this work, thou perfect high priest of faith? I will never admit any until thou shalt have fully explained the thing according to my capacity.

The Imám.—To-day, dear sister, Shimar will behave cruelly towards me. He will sever my dear head from the body. His dagger not cutting my throat, he will be obliged to sever my head from behind. After he has killed me, when he begins to strip me of my clothes, he may perchance be ashamed to take off this ragged robe and thereby leave my body naked on the ground.

Zainab.—O Lord, have mercy on my distracted heart! Thou alone art aware of the state of my mind. Gracious Creator, preserve the soul of Husain! Let not heaven pull down my house over me!

Sukainah.—Dear father, by our Lord it is a painful thing to be fatherless; a misery, a great calamity to be helpless, bleeding in the heart, and an outcast! Dismount from the saddle, and make me sit by thy side. To pass over me or neglect me at such a time is very distressing. Let me put my head on thy dear lap, O father. It is sad thou shouldst not be aware of thy dear child's condition.

Husain.—Bend not thy neck on one side, thou my beloved child; nor weep so sadly, like an orphan. Neither moan so melodiously, like a disconsolate nightingale. Come, lay thy dear head on my knees once more, and shed not so copiously a flood of tears from thine eyes, thou spirit of my life.

Sukainah.—Dear father, thou whose lot is but grief, have mercy on me, mercy! O thou my physician in every pain and trouble, have pity on me! have pity on me! Alas, my heart, for the mention of the word separation! Alas, my grievance, for what is unbearable!

Husain.—Groan not, wail not, my dear Sukainah, my poor oppressed, distressed girl. Go to thy tent and sleep

soundly in thy bed until thy father gets thee some water to drink.

Zainab.—Alas! alas! woe to me! my Husain is gone from me! Alas! alas! the arrow of my heart is shot away from the hand! Woe unto me, a thousand woes! I am to remain without Husain! The worshipper of truth is gone to meet his destined fate with a blood-stained shroud!

Husain.—My disconsolate Zainab, be not so impatient. My homeless sister, show not thyself so fretful. Have patience, sister, the reward of the patient believers is the best of all. Render God thanks, the crown of intercession is fitted for our head only.

Zainab.—O my afflicted mother, thou best of all women,* pass a minute by those in Karbalá! see thy daughters prisoners of sorrow! behold them amidst strangers and foreigners. Come out awhile from thy pavilion in Paradise, O Fátimah, and weep affectionately over the state of us, thy children!

Husain.—I have become friendless and without any helper, in a most strange manner. I have lost my troop and army in a wonderful way. Where is Akbar my son? let him come to me and hold the bridle of my horse, that I may mount.† Where is Kásim my nephew? will he not

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* See note *, p. 42, vol. i.

† "He mounted his steed Zool-junna, repaired to the field of battle, and thus addressed the enemy: 'O ye tribe of the followers of the faith! Be it known unto you that I am the grandson of the Prophet, and the son of Allie, he whose grandfather's creed (there is no God but the one true God, and Mohummud is His Messenger) ye repeat night and day. Behold, consider who it is of whom Mohummud is the friend. If ye have any fear of God or His Messenger before your eyes, or expect the intercession of my grandfather at the Day of Judgment, then fear and tremble. Ye have already exalted many of my relatives, friends, and companions to the dignity of martyrs! Be it so. I have only one request to make; and that is, allow me and my household to quit Arabia and proceed to Persia. If not, for God's sake give us a little water to

help me and get ready my stirrup to make me cheerful? Why should I not shed much blood from mine eyes, seeing I cannot behold 'Abbás my standard-bearer? A brother is for the day of misfortune and calamity! A brother is better than a hundred diadems and thrones! A brother is the essence of life in the world! He who has a brother, though he be old, yet is young. Who is there to bring my horse for me? there is none. There is none even to weep for me in this state of misery!

Kulsúm.—Because there is no 'Alí Akbar, dear brother, to help thee, Zainab, thy sister, will hold the horse for thee; and seeing 'Abbás, thy brother, is no longer to be found, I myself will bear the standard before thy winged steed instead of him.

Zainab.—Let Zainab mourn bitterly for her brother's desolation. Who ever saw a woman, a gentlewoman, doing the duty of a groom or servant? Who can know, O Lord, besides Thee, the sad state of Husain in Karbalá, where his people so deserted him that a woman like myself is obliged to act as a servant for him?

Kulsúm.—I am a standard-bearer for Husain, the martyr of Karbalá, O Lord God. I am the sister of 'Abbás; yea, the miserable sister of both. O friends, it being the tenth day of Muharram,* I am therefore assisting Husain. I am bearing the ensign for him instead of 'Abbás my brother, his standard-bearer.

Zainab.—Uncover your breasts a minute, O ye tear-shedding people, for it is time to beat the drum, seeing the king is going to ride. O Solomon the Prophet, where

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drink. Your cattle, elephants, horses, and camels have plenty to drink, but my family is exceedingly distressed and crying out for water. Among what tribe do ye find it thus? The children's throats are parched with thirst; and for want of water the milk is dried up in the mother's breast.'"—Herklots' "Qanoon-e-islam," p. 164, ed. 1832.

* Husain was slain on the 10th day of Muharram.

is thy glory? what has become of thy pompous retinue? Where are thy brothers, nephews, and companions?

Husain.—There are none left to help me. My sister Zainab holds the bridle of the horse, and walks before me. Who ever saw a lady acting thus?

Zainab.—Thou art going all alone! May the souls of all be a ransom for thee! and may thy departure make souls quit their bodies! A resurrection will be produced in thy tent by the cry of orphans and widows.

Husain.—Sister, though it grieves me to go, yet I do it; peradventure I may see the face of Asghar and the countenance of Akbar, those cypresses, those roses of Paradise.

Zainab.—Would to God Zainab had died this very minute before thy face, in thy sight, that she might not behold such elegant bodies, such beautiful forms, rolling in their own blood!

Husain.—O poor sister, if thou die here in this land in that sudden way that thou desirest, then who will ride in thy stead, in the city of Kúfah, on the camel's back?

Zainab.—Slight not my pain, dear brother, for Zainab is somewhat alarmed as to the import of thy speech. What shall I do with thy family—with the poor widows and young children?

Husain.—O afflicted one, it is decreed I should be killed by means of daggers and swords; henceforth, dear sister, thou shalt not see me. Behold, this is separation between me and thee!

The nephew of Husain.—Dear uncle, thou hast resolved to journey. Thou art going once again to make me an orphan. To whom else wilt thou entrust us? Who is expected to take care of us? Thou wast, dear uncle, instead of my father Hasan, a defence to this helpless exiled creature.

Husain.—Sorrow not, thou faithful child, thou shalt be killed too in this plain of trials. Return thou now to thy

tent in peace, without grieving my soul any further, poor orphan!

The Darwish from Kábul.—O Lord God, wherefore is the outward appearance of a man of God usually without decoration or ornament? And why is the lap of the man of this world generally full of gold and jewels? On what account is the pillow of this great person the black dust of the road? and for what reason are the bed and the cushion of the rebellious made of velvet, and stuffed with down? Either Islám, the religion of peace and charity, has no true foundation in the world, or this young man, who is so wounded and suffers from thirst, is still an infidel.

Husain.—Why are thine eyes pouring down tears, young darwísh? Hast thou also lost an Akbar in the prime of his youth? Thou art immersed, as a water-fowl, in thy tears. Has thine 'Abbás been slain, thirsting, on the bank of the River Euphrates, that thou cryest so piteously? But if thou art sad only on account of my misfortune, then it matters not. Let me know whence comest thou, and whither is thy face set?

The Darwish.—It happened, young man, that last night I arrived in this valley, and made my lodging there. When one-half of the night had passed, of a sudden a great difficulty befell me, for I heard a child bemoaning and complaining of thirst, having given up altogether the idea of living any longer in this world. Sometimes it would beat its head and cry out for water; at other times it appeared to fall on the ground, fainting and motionless. I have, therefore, brought some water in this cup for that poor child, that it may drink and be refreshed a little. So I humbly beg thee, dear sir, to direct me to the place where the young child may be found, and tell me what is its name.

Husain.—O God, let no man be ever in my pitiful condition, nor any family in this sad and deplorable state to which I am reduced. O young man, the child mentioned

by thee is the peace of my troubled mind; it is my poor, miserable little girl.

The Darwish.—May I be offered for thee, dear sir, and for thy tearful eyes! Why should thy daughter be so sadly mourning and complaining? My heart is overwhelmed with grief for the abundance of tears running down thy cheeks. Why should the daughter of one like thee, a generous soul, suffer from thirst?

Husain.—Know, O young man, that we are never in need of the water of this life. Thou art quite mistaken if thou hast supposed us to be of this world. If I will, I can make the moon, or any other celestial orb, fall down on the earth; how much more can I get water for my children. Look at the hollow made in the ground with my spear; water would gush out of it if I were to like. I voluntarily die of thirst to obtain a crown of glory from God. I die parched, and offer myself a sacrifice for the sins of my people, that they should be saved from the wrath to come.

The Darwish.—What is thy name, sir? I perceive that thou art one of the chief saints of the most beneficent God. It is evident to me that thou art the brightness of the Lord's image, but I cannot tell to which sacred garden thy holy rose belongs.

Husain.—O darwish, thou wilt soon be informed of the whole matter, for thou shalt be a martyr thyself; for thy plans and the result thereof have been revealed to me. Tell me, O darwish, what is the end thou hast in view in this thy hazardous enterprise? When thou shalt have told me that, I will disclose to thee who I am.

The Darwish.—I intend, noble sir, after I have known the mystery of thy affairs, to set out, if God wills, from Karbalá to Najaf,* namely, to the place where 'Alí, the highly exalted king of religion, the sovereign lord of the empire of existence, the supreme master of all the dar-

* See note, p. 241, vol. i.

wíshes, is buried. Yea, I am going to visit the tomb of 'Alí, the successor of the chosen of God, the son-in-law of the Prophet, the lion of the true Lord, the prince of believers, Haidar,* the champion of faith.

Husain.—Be it known unto thee, O darwísh, that I, who am so sad and sorrowful, am the rose of the garden of that prince. I am of the family of the believers thou hast mentioned. I am Husain, the intercessor on the Day of Resurrection, the rose of the garden of glory.

The Darwísh.—May I be offered a sacrifice for thy blessed arrival! Pardon me my fault, and give me permission to fight the battle of faith, for I am weary of life. It is better for me to be killed, and delivered at once from so many vexations of spirit. Martyrdom is, in fact, one of the glories of my faith.

Husain.—Go forth, O atom, which aspirest to the glory of the sun; go forth, thou hast become at last worthy to know the hidden mysteries of faith. He who is slain for the sake of Husain shall have an abundant reward from God; yea, he shall be raised to life with 'Alí Akbar the sweet son of Husain.

The Darwísh (addressing Husain's antagonists).—You cruel people have no religion at all. You are fire-worshippers, ignorant of God and His law. How long will you act unjustly towards the offspring of the priesthood? Is the account of the Day of Resurrection all false?

Ibn Sa'd (the general of Yazíd's† army).—O ye brave soldiers of Yazíd, deprive this fellow of his fund of life. Make his friends ready to mourn for him.

Husain.—Is there anyone to help me? Is there any assistant to lend me his aid?

Ja'far‡ (the king of jinns, with his troops, coming to Husain's

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* See note, p. 39, vol. i. † See note †, p. 17, vol. i.

‡ "The moment his highness Hosein dismounted from his horse, a man appeared to him, having a human countenance, but the arms, legs, and body of a horse. The figure, after making its obeisance, thus addressed

assistance).—O king of men and jinns, O Husain, peace be on thee! O judge of corporeal and spiritual beings, peace be on thee!

Husain.—On thee be peace, thou handsome youth! Who art thou, that salutest us at such a time? Though thine affairs are not hidden from me at all, still it is advisable to ask thy name.

Ja'far.—O lord of men and jinns, I am the least of thy servants, and my name is Ja'far, the chief ruler of all the tribes of jinns. To-day, while I was sitting on the glorious throne of my majesty, easy in mind, without any sad idea or thought whatever, I suddenly heard thy voice, when thou didst sadly implore assistance; and on hearing thee I lost my patience and senses. And, behold, I have come out with troops of jinns, of various abilities and qualifications, to lend thee help if necessary.

Husain.—In the old abbey of this perishable kingdom, none can ever, O Ja'far, attain to immortality. What can I do with with the empire of the world, or its tempting glories, after my dear ones have all died and gone? Is it

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Hosein: 'If you will allow me, I shall instantly vanquish all your foes. Hosein inquired, 'Who art thou, that at this season of distress hast in pity come to my succour?' He replied, 'I am Jaffur, the son of Tyar, king of the fairies. I am under infinite obligations to you, for your father rendered mine an essential service at the battle of Beer-ool-ullum. When the whole race of genii were over-ruled and made Moosulmans, he appointed my father king over them.' Hosein observed, 'Thou wilt be invisible to them, though they be visible to thee; such treacherous warfare is not pleasing unto God, nor will I sanction it.' Jaffur entreated him a second time, saying, 'I beseech you, Hosein, for your own sake, to allow me for a couple of *ghurrees* (about an hour) to assume a human form to stand up in thy defence.' Hosein again replied, with his blessed tongue, 'What use is there now in fighting? I am only a momentary sojourner in this transitory world; my relatives and companions are all gone, and what will it profit me to remain behind? I long for nothing now, save my martyrdom; therefore, depart thou, and may the Lord recompense and bless thee.' Jaffur then departed, much grieved, and weeping."—Herklots' "Qanoon-e-Islam," p. 166, ed. 1832. See also note, p. 24, vol. i.

proper that I, an old man, should live, and Akbar, a blooming youth, die in the prime of age? Return thou, Ja'far, to thy home, and weep for me as much as thou canst.

Ja'far (*returning*).—Alas for Husain's exile and helplessness! Alas for his continual groans and sighs!

Husain (*coming back from the field, dismounts his horse, and making a heap of dust, lays his head on it*).—O earth of Karbalá, do thou assist me, I pray! since I have no mother, be thou to me instead of one.

Ibn Sa'd orders the army to stone Husain.—O ye men of valour, Husain the son of 'Alí has tumbled down from the winged horse; if I be not mistaken, heaven has fallen to earth! It is better for you to stone him most cruelly. Dispatch him soon, with stones, to his companions.

Husain.—Ah, woe to me! my forehead is broken; blood runs down my luminous face.

Ibn Sa'd.—Who is that brave soldier, who, in order to show his gratitude to Yazíd his sovereign lord, will step forward and, with a blow of his scymetar, slay Husain the son of 'Alí?

Shimar.—I am he whose dagger is famous for bloodshed. My mother has borne me for this work alone. I care not about the conflict of the Day of Judgment; I am a worshipper of Yazíd, and have no fear of God. I can make the great throne of the Lord to shake and tremble. I alone can sever from the body the head of Husain the son of 'Alí. I am he who has no share in Islám. I will strike the chest of Husain, the ark of God's knowledge, with my boots, without any fear of punishment.

Husain.—Oh, how wounds caused by arrows and daggers do smart! O God, have mercy in the Day of Judgment on my people for my sake. The time of death has arrived, but I have not my Akbar with me. Would to God my grandfather the Prophet were now here to see me!

The Prophet (*appearing*).—Dear Husain, thy grandfather

the Prophet of God has come to see thee. I am here to behold the mortal wounds of thy delicate body. Dear child, thou hast at length suffered martyrdom by the cruel hand of my own people! This was the reward I expected from them; thanks be to God! Open thine eyes, dear son, and behold thy grandfather with dishevelled hair. If thou hast any desire in thy heart, speak it out to me.

Husain.—Dear grandfather, I abhor life; I would rather go and visit my dear ones in the next world. I earnestly desire to see my companions and friends—above all, my dearly beloved son 'Alí Akbar.

The Prophet.—Be not grieved that 'Alí Akbar thy son was killed, since it tends to the good of my sinful people on the day of universal gathering.

Husain.—Seeing 'Alí Akbar's martyrdom contributes to the happiness of thy people, seeing my own sufferings give validity to thy office of mediation, and seeing thy rest consists in my being troubled in this way, I would offer my soul, not once or twice, but a thousand times, for the salvation of thy people!

The Prophet.—Sorrow not, dear grandchild; thou shalt be a mediator, too, in that day. At present thou art thirsty, but to-morrow thou shalt be the distributor of the water of Al Kausar.*

Husain.—O Lord God, besides Husain, who has happened to be thus situated? Every one when he dies has at least a mother at his head. But my mother is not here to rend her garments for me; she is not alive, that she might close my eyes when I die.

Fátimah, his mother (appearing).—I am come to see thee, my child, my child! May I die another time, my child, my child! How shall I see thee slain, my son, my son! Rolling in thine own blood, my child, my child!

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* See note *, p. 96, vol. i.

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Husain.—Come, dear mother, I am anxiously waiting for thee. Come, come! I have partly to complain of thee. How is it that thou hast altogether forsaken thy son? How is it thou camest so late to visit me?

Fátimah.—May I be offered for thy wounded, defaced body! Tell me, what dost thou wish thy mother to do now for thee?

Husain.—I am now, dear mother, at the point of death. The ark of life is going to be cast on shore, mother. It is time that my soul should leave the body. Come, mother, close my eyes with thy kind hand.

Fátimah.—O Lord, how difficult for a mother to see her dear child dying! I am Zahrah who am making this sad noise, because I have to close the eyes of my son Husain, who is on the point of death. Oh, tell me if thou hast any desire long cherished in thy heart, for I am distressed in mind owing to thy sad sighs!

Husain.—Go, mother, my soul is come to my throat; go, I had no other desire except one, with which I must rise in the Day of Resurrection, namely, to see 'Alí Akbar's wedding.

Shimar.—Make thy confession, for I want to sever thy head, and cause a perpetual separation between it and the body.

Zainab.—O Shimar, do not go beyond thy limit; let me bind something on my brother's eyes.

Husain.—Go to thy tent, sister, I am already undone. Go away; Zahrah my mother has already closed my eyes. Show to Sukainah my daughter always the tenderness of a mother. Be very kind to my child after me.

Shimar (*addressing Husain*).—Stretch forth thy feet toward the holy Kiblah,* the sacred temple of Makkah. See how my dagger waves over thee! It is time to cut thy throat.

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* See note, p. 168, vol. i.

Husain.—O Lord, for the merit of me, the dear child of thy Prophet; O Lord, for the sad groaning of my miserable sister; O Lord, for the sake of young 'Abbás rolling in his blood, even that young brother of mine that was equal to my soul, I pray thee, in the Day of Judgment, forgive, O merciful Lord, the sins of my grandfather's people, and grant me, bountifully, the key of the treasure of intercession. (*Dies.*)

SCENE XXIV.

THE CAMP AT KARBALA AFTER THE DEATH OF HUSAIN.

AFTER the death of Husain his family wandered about the camp distracted and bewildered. Perplexed and scarce knowing what to do, they at first commence to complain of the cruel fate which had overtaken them; but in the midst of their troubles they began to realise that the enemy still surround them, and they accordingly keep watch over the camp lest a sudden surprise should bring upon them that destruction which had overtaken their chief. To add to their distress Rukkayah, a daughter of Husain, is missing from their number, and the family lament her loss in loud and bitter tones of lamentation, which so affected the soul of the departed 'Alí that his spirit returns to earth and points out to the sorrowing women where the lost damsel can be found. "O thirsty ones," says one of the unhappy family, "Husain's child is lying down in the field of battle; the planet that had been lost sight of is discovered in the vicinity of the moon." Thus far well; but the Scene closes, leaving the women of Husain's camp alarmed and sore distressed, anticipating at any moment an irruption of the enemy, and consequent captivity and shame.

*Zain-ul-'Abid-dín.**—To-night is the night succeeding the day on which Husain was made a martyr, and went from Karbalá to rest in the meadows of Paradise. To-night is the night when, by the injustice of Shimar,† small children

* See note †, p. 96, vol. i.

† See note, p. 43, vol. i.

were deprived of seeing the dear face of their parent. To-night is the night on which Fátimah* the virgin reddened her face with the blood of different martyrs. The spheres have rendered our fortune and our day both dark. May thy face, O white-faced heavens, be altogether black!

Zainab.—To-night is a night on the morning whereof 'Alí's head was cloven in twain, and the moon Husain was made a martyr with the daggers of injustice. To-night is the night when, through the wicked behaviour of the inhabitants of Kúfah,† the wolf of death tore my Joseph's coat to pieces. To-night is the night wherein heaven humbled me. May thy day, O bright-faced spheres, be altogether dark!

Kulsúm.—To-night is the night when I am perplexed in my affairs for the calamity that has befallen us destitute ones. To-night is the night wherein the child brought up in my mother's bosom was plunged in blood. To-night is the night in which my head-dress was turned black. May thy face, O white-faced spheres, be altogether black!

Sukainah.—To-night is the night when the story of her father's death was, for the first time, whispered in Sukainah's ear by the Zephyr. To-night is the night wherein Sukainah has been made an orphan. May thy face, O white-faced spheres, be altogether black!

Rukayyah.—To-night is the night succeeding the day on which Sinán‡ cruelly, without cause, pierced the side of my father with his spear. To-night is the night when, some hours ago, Harmalah cruelly made the blood of Asghar's§ delicate throat drop on the ground. To-night is the night

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* See note, p. 57, vol. i. † See note, p. 9, vol. i.

‡ "At last came Seenan the son of Arwa, together with Shoomur-zil-Jowshun, who had previously offered a stipulation to Oomur and Abdoollah, that they would bring them Hosein's head, provided these would promise to recommend that each should receive a *jageer* as his reward."—Herklots' "Qanoon-e-Islam," p. 167, ed. 1832.

§ See note †, p. 11, vol. i.

when Rukayyah must give up the ghost. May thy face, O white-faced spheres, be altogether black!

Zain-ul-'Abid-dín.—Come, O Zainab, my hand is unable to work; the habitation looks solitary because its beloved occupant is gone. Husain has departed while his green pavilion is still standing in its place. The mirror* has withdrawn itself from among the rust. The children have remained, but the father is killed; the widows are left behind, while the protector is gone.

Zainab.—Yes, dear nephew, the rose has quitted the meadow of time; the mirror-holder having departed, the world looks gloomy. 'Abbás is gone to one side, Akbar to another, thy excellent father to the third, and Sukainah, my child, the unfortunate girl, has become fatherless, and the lustrous pearl is missed.

Zain-ul-'Abid-dín.—My father, may my soul be a sacrifice for him! was made a martyr; our hearts are sorrowful, for he is missed. Who will to-night keep watch over the family? Husain's palace door has no guard. What can I, a sick person, do, dear aunt, seeing that so many enemies are standing behind his tents. He has entrusted his children to the care of me and thee; arise then, O aunt, and guard the poor things from harm.

Zainab.—Our children are all in trouble, they have all become sickly; the poor children, being hungry and thirsty for bread and water, have all fainted away in the tents. Should Sukainah demand water from me, what shall I do for her? or what shall I answer her if the poor broken-hearted little creature were to inquire about her father?

Zain-ul-'Abid-dín.—If the poor heart-burned orphans thirst for water, they have all got bags of the same in their eyes, owing to their dire oppression, dear aunt. Go and tell them the story of our Karbalá, and rehearse it in their

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* See note †, p. 226, vol. i.

ears, peradventure in this way thou mayest make them sleep.

Sukainah.—Sukainah will perish because of the absence of her father; her cry is ascending from earth to heaven. O father! by thy dear life do I swear I did not know that thy resting-place must be under the earth.

Zainab.—Cry not so much, poor Sukainah, lest thou shouldst die! Art thou weary of thine own life, dear child? Mourn not, for what canst thou gain by lamenting? thou being yet a child shouldst have a thousand hopes in thy heart.

Sukainah.—What can an orphan do but mourn? It is hard to console miserable, desolate children with mere words; an exile is sorry because he is far removed from his home, and poor orphans weep always for the sad remembrance of their parents!

Zainab.—Oh, do not say so! my Sukainah shall never become fatherless! her mourning cries shall not be fruitless.

Sukainah.—The fruit in the garden of this life tastes bitter to my palate; a nightingale entertains no pleasanter idea than that of the rose. If the light of our life is not already put out, how is it there is no lamp burning in Husain's tent to-night?

Zainab.—The breath of life is going to leave my nostrils through what thou sayest. Nay, thy cypress-like* beloved is not killed, but gone from the garden. I have told them not to light the lamp, because thy father, the shining gem, is away to-night.

Sukainah.—If it be so, why do they not let me come in as usual? I being so thirsty, why does nobody give me water? If I am not an orphan, what is the reason the people do not answer me when I salute them?

Zainab.—Hearken to thy aunt, darling, cease lamenting

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* See note, p. 10, vol. i.

so sadly, and do not mourn so dolefully from the bottom of thy heart. Shed no tears through what I say; thy father is certainly not dead. Why shouldst thou suspect my veracity, or doubt the truth of my assertion?

Sukainah.—If my father were alive I would not cry; and I should not have been thus distressed, thus distracted in mind, had Husain been living, dear aunt. I, the poor ant,* would have been now with Solomon.

Zainab.—O God, look upon my weakness! I am not able to prevail over even a little girl, to make her quiet. Sleep, dear niece, sleep. As soon as the day dawns, I shall take thee to the bank of the river, and seat thee in thy father's lap.

Sukainah.—Let me alone, dear aunt. Let me mourn, that I may soften some hearts; let me groan vainly for the absence of my beloved ones. Without my father I cannot close my eyes to sleep. I will not rest but in the bosom of my parent.

Zainab.—Sleep, dear niece, that thou mayest have some rest, and forget for a while thy misery and thy thirst. Thou art drowned in thy tears, poor thing; thou art not, girl, a water-fowl to escape such a deluge.

Sukainah.—I will weep so much, that I shall be borne away by the stream of tears, and cry so loud as to be deprived of all strength. I shall go to bed, dear aunt, in compliance with thy order; but as I cannot sleep, I shall lay moaning in bed, perchance I may fall asleep.

Rukayyah.—O God, I am the most unfortunate creature of this age. I am the only one who is destitute of all friendly comforts. If Sukainah's† father is dead, she has an aunt like Zainab to sympathise with her; I am the most miserable of all the children in the family.

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* See note *, p. 226, vol. i.

† As Sukainah and Rukayyah were both daughters of Husain and nieces of Zainab, this speech is not very intelligible.

Zainab (*addressing Kulsúm*).—Come, O oppressed sister, thou sorrowful creature who hast not seen much pleasure in thy life, go and comfort Rukayyah, for I know she is not pleased with the unfortunate Zainab.

Kulsúm (*to Rukayyah*).—O fatherless orphan, how long wilt thou continue crying? how long wilt thou complain against heaven's cruelty. Mourn not and distress the poor women of the family; pour not tears from thine eyes, making the hearts of thy companions bleed.

Rukayyah.—Oh, let me alone! it is the custom of wretched exiles to cry; interfere not with me, it is a habit with afflicted creatures to weep. I do not wish any comforter in thee, aunt; go, put Sukainah to bed and make her sleep; go, comb her hair and form it into ringlets for her.

Kulsúm.—Thou art the pupil of my tearful eyes, O niece! by Husain's soul, thou art as dear to me as Sukainah thy sister. I always have had a tender regard for thee, my dear; nay, I love thee above all the children of our family.

Rukayyah.—Oh, why art thou troubling me, aunt? what kind of affection is this that thou showest to me? No candle can give light in two different places, aunt; to be sure, nobody's heart will burn for the orphans of other men.

Kulsúm.—My dear Rukayyah, do not vex me needlessly; do not melt my soul with thy pungent, soul-consuming words. Do not burn my heart with this fire; do not distress thyself, there is no occasion thou shouldst complain of thy miserable aunt, thou sweet child.

Rukayyah.—If, O aunt, thou hast any regard for my miserable state, show me my father just now as a proof of thy consideration. It is night, aunt, and the atmosphere looks quite dark; remove then the veil that hides the sun from my view.

Kulsúm.—Sleep, dear niece, and dream of the presence of thy father. Put thy head in my lap, and rest, O destitute, fatherless exile.

Rukayyah.—Well, I will go to sleep, but I do not think I can find my father, or receive any intelligence about my beloved who is lost. My father has no regard for his orphans, nor, in truth, have my midnight prayers any effect.

Zainab.—O destitute solitary aunt that I am! what about me? I am dying with grief. Oh! think of some plan to relieve me. The children are without any guard to-night, while the enemy lies in wait for us, and we have none to keep the camp.

Zainab.—Kulsúm, sister, beat on thy head and shed tears! Go and call Kásim's mother from the tent, that we may set out, each to a particular spot, and cry aloud. Let us guard the camp and the furniture to-night!

Kásim's Mother.—O Kásim, may I be a sacrifice for this thy unoccupied chamber! may I be a ransom for thy sweet mouth and lips! O God, I cannot forget Kásim for a moment! I wonder where Kásim my bridegroom is to-night.

Kulsúm.—Moan not to-night, O mother of Kásim, nor lament, but come that we may go to my sister Zainab. Pour not tears from thy eyes, but walk forth, for my melancholy sister Zainab wants to see thee.

Kásim's Mother.—Where is my troubled and sorrowful sister Zainab? where is my sad and brotherless sister?

Kulsúm.—She is gone out from the camp in a distracted manner, continually making mention of the martyrs of Karbalá. She is pouring tears, and casting dust* on her head, being much confused, but I cannot say why she has called thee.

Zainab.—Come, O mother of Kásim, I am here; come and see, I am like a plaintive bird as regards my voice. Come and behold how my straight cypress-like stature is bent by the weight of my beloved one's absence.

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* A sign of grief.

Kásim's Mother.—What service can Kásim's mother, thy obedient handmaid, render thee, O sorrowful and afflicted soul?

Zainab.—There is not one solitary being now throughout the world to sympathise with me: there is no one left in our camp besides a few widows. The merciless enemy has shut us in on all sides, and the poor children start from their sleep, being frightened by the noise of the army. To-night we must do our best to take care of the children; we widows, instead of men, must keep watch to-night.

Kulsúm.—No heart has ever been burnt like mine; no house was at any time destroyed like ours. During the day we sigh, moan, and cry, and at night we lament and mourn. Well, sister Zainab, let us know what we ought to do.

Zainab.—Take, O Kulsúm, the spear, and, heaving sighs from thy heart, go out, instead of my dear 'Abbás, to patrol the camp.

Kulsúm.—The cruel heavens have made the king of Hijáz wallow in his own blood; Shimar the wicked is glorying because he has killed Husain.

Zainab (to Kásim's Mother).—O mother of the bridegroom, thou broken-hearted, soul-distressed woman! take thou the sword and spear of Kásim, and, keeping this side of the camp, call on Hasan thy husband; cry to me in the event of thy seeing anybody approaching.

Kásim's Mother.—Come out, O Hasan, from the graveyard of Bakía'* and visit thy wife; flutter, O heavenly bird, in the atmosphere of Karbalá! Kásim's mother is in distress, come forth and save her; listen to her complaint, O Hasan, and deliver her.

Zainab.—O 'Alí Akbar, may I be a ransom for thy sword-like eye-brows! O thou deer, may I be sacrificed

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* See note, p. 169, vol. i.

for thy curling locks! Oh, may the souls of the women of this camp be offered for thy lips! Zainab thy aunt is to-night keeping guard over thy ownerless tent.

Kulsúm.—O God, where to-night is the commander of this army? where is 'Abbás, that lion-like warrior?

Kásim's Mother.—Where is Kásim, our bridegroom, that moon-faced,* sun-like youth, that rose-bodied lad, that soul-pierced creature?

Zainab.—I do not know, O Lord, where to find 'Alí Akbar to-night. Where is the youth who afforded rest to the afflicted Zainab's soul?

Kulsúm.—'Abbás, O friends, was last night here; he kept watch over me from evening until the dawn of day.

Kásim's Mother.—Last night Kásim's hand was in the bosom of the bride, he was with her all the evening until dawn.

Kulsúm.—Last night Akbar was here guarding his father from evening until morning.

Rukayyah (going out).—She whose father hath died, and who is destitute of a protector, in vain labours to sleep. I will arise and go out of my tent, in the hope of seeing my father; peradventure I may behold the full moon in this dark night. O honourable father, separate me not from thyself, but let me sleep by thy side.

Husain's Body (speaking).—My poor Rukayyah is moaning to-night; my dear family is in a wandering state. Exile has produced nought but distraction. To be an orphan is little better than to be a vagrant. Nobody cares for another man's orphan; Thou, O Lord, art both beneficent and merciful to all.

Rukayyah.—It being a dark night, I cannot see the beloved of my soul. I cannot tell where my rose-cheeked, cypress-bodied love is sleeping. Give me an intimate

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* See note, p. 7, vol. i.

knowledge of thyself, dear father, for I am distracted to-night. O sojourner of Karbalá, pour forth thy notes as a nightingale, and refresh my brain with the fragrant scent of spring. O father, the spheres do not treat me kindly, nothing can be agreeable but thy company.

The Body of Husain.—My distressed one, turn thy face to this side. Come to me, O solace of my restless soul. O thou who art scarred with grief at my absence, come, here is he whom thy soul seeketh. Give light at my pillow, like a candle, for I have no lamp * burning on my tomb.

Rukayyah.—A murmur struck my ears, O friends. I caught a familiar sound just now. It is thy voice, O father, that I hear, but I can hardly say where thou art. Tell me where to find thee, that I may come, for I can no more bear to be separated from thee.

The Body.—Poor Rukayyah is looking here and there for her father. Yea, of necessity a planet seeks the sun. Come amongst the slain, O child, for in desiring to see thy face the wounded mouths of the martyrs get refreshed.

Rukayyah.—This voice melts my heart within me; it destroys the foundation of my patience. Would to God this nightingale were to sing again, and show that my midnight prayers have been already heard!

The Body of Husain.—Hear the true sound of my voice; let the ravishing air of my singing enchant thee. Come to me, that thou mayest dye thy hands with the blood of my body, and make them red † like the feet of the partridge, O my royal hawk.

Rukayyah (*in the field*).—With many difficulties, O father,

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* "They generally light a lamp on the spot where the person died, where the body was washed, and some also on the tomb, for three, ten, or forty nights, and until the fortieth day."—Herklots' "Qanoon-e-Islam," p. 425, ed. 1832.

† See note ‡, p. 118, vol. i.

I have come here to thy dwelling-place in this spot of ground. I have been successful in detecting thy scent, but I cannot distinguish thy body among the many slain lying around thee. I pray thee, father, lift up thy hand, that I may be able to recognise thy elegant stature.

The Body of Husain.—I shall lift up my hand for thy sake, dear child. Ah, thou dost see it! Come, then, and sit down by my side; I have no head, child, that I may ask thee to put it on thy lap. As for the voice, it proceeds from my throat only.

Rukayyah.—May my soul be a sacrifice for thy body, which is drenched with its own blood! May thy daughter be a ransom for thy severed head! Who hath beheaded thee, and made me, at such an age, a fatherless wanderer?

The Body of Husain.—The cruel Shimar, child, severed my head from the body. He cut it from behind with the edge of his dagger. He has not only cut off my head, but has done the like to Kásim and 'Abbás.

Rukayyah.—There fell a fire, at last, amongst the chattels of thy life, dear father; the burning bush of the blessed valley has been at length hewn down. I fear, dear father, lest Shimar should come and hurt me; I beg thee, therefore, to hide thy poor daughter under thy garments.

The Body.—O my soft-hearted girl, thou light of my bright eyes, I have no garments wherewith to hide thee under their skirts. Dost thou not see, child, that, notwithstanding so many wounds, my body is thrown naked in the sun?

Rukayyah.—I shall cover thy body with my head-dress, dear father. Put thy hand round my neck, as thou hast no bosom for me to clasp.

The Body.—Sleep, darling, in this very place in my bosom; between my arms thou shalt find thy usual resting-place; sleep on, then.

Rukayyah (*laying down to sleep by the body*).—There is no place more suitable to me than by the side of my father. I can nowhere else rest but in his dear bosom. I will sleep

to-night in thy sacred arms, father. I wish the sun would not rise from the east and make it day.

Zainab.—O 'Alí, thou prince of believers, remember thy Zainab to-night. Draw thy sword from its sheath, and ride on thy swift steed.

Kulsúm.—O lady Zahrah,* behold our sad condition in Karbalá, where there is nothing but affliction and sorrow. These poor, desolate, scarred-hearted creatures have gathered no rose of pleasure since coming to the rose-garden of Karbalá.

Zainab.—O black spectre, why dost thou come toward us? Step not thus forward, but keep thy place. Make not Fátimah's daughter dishevel her hair, and do not molest the poor orphans.

'Alí's Ghost.—Fear not, Zainab, thou sorrowful, desolate creature. Be not dismayed, thou distressed and miserable daughter. Go not far from me, Zainab, for I am not a stranger. Be not disquieted on my account, Zainab, but take rest.

Zainab.—Unless thou tellest me what thy name is, thou must stand where thou art, without moving a step towards the ladies of the apartment. Have regard for 'Alí, the prince of believers, O young man, and give up the intention of troubling us to-night.

'Alí's Ghost.—I am an acquaintance, O Zainab; why dost thou timidly avoid me? I am the prince of believers. What prevents thee from recognising me, child? I heard in Najaf† that to-night the women would keep watch, and am come, O Zainab, to take the responsibility on myself.

Zainab.—O 'Alí, they have maliciously put out thy burning candle; so long as I am alive I will not withdraw my hand from thy skirt. Husain's children are trembling through fear like weeping willows, because of the frequent blows which Shimar the profane has given them.

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* See note, p. 22, vol. i.

† See note, p. 241, vol. i.

'Alí.—Have patience, my poor Zainab; weary not thyself of life. Have recourse to frequent prayers during the night, in order that my Shí'ahs may drink the sweet water of Paradise.

Zainab.—If my assembly break up for the sake of the Shí'ahs; if I be consumed before the fire of injustice like a fowl; since it tends to the salvation of God's elect, I am not in the least degree sorry. Even, indeed, were they to make me ride on a she-camel without litters.

'Alí's Ghost.—Heave not sighs from thy breast, miserable Zainab, but retire behind the curtain. Return to thy tent, my daughter; I am a prisoner of sorrow like thyself. Retire to thy home; I am the guardian of this family, and will keep watch to-night.

Hasan's Ghost (*appearing*).—The transaction of Karbalá has vexed Hasan grievously; the poison of sorrow has again begun to work out destruction in me. I thought Kásim the bridegroom, the light of my eyes, my son, would sit in my place after me, little dreaming that the enemy would cut his throat. O Lord, have mercy on my dear son's miserable mother.

Kásim's Mother.—Who art thou, O dark spectre? attempt not to hurt those that are oppressed with trouble. Fear God, and abstain from breaking the heart of this afflicted company in our camp. O spirit, there is not a solitary individual to be found. Thou shalt meet with none but fatherless children and painful-hearted widows in this place.

Hasan's Ghost.—Be not afraid, O mother of Kásim, I am a friend unto thee and a comforter; have no care at all, I am thy faithful companion. I have come to make thy sorrowful heart rejoice, and to congratulate thee on Kásim's late marriage.

Kásim's Mother.—If, O spectre, thou art our confidential friend, tell me, then, thy name; deliver thy message from afar if thou art not an enemy.

Hasan's Ghost.—Be not distressed, O mother of Kásim,

I am one of this assembly; I am Hasan the many-leafed rose of the garden of prophecy. I am that sugar-lipped parrot whose body was rendered green* through the effect of poison.

Kásim's Mother.—Oh! thou wast not here, O Hasan, to see Kásim's nuptial feast and his merry banquet. I beheld nothing of poor Kásim's marriage ceremony, which was rather an occasion for mourning. Thou wast not here, O Hasan, to behold sorrow and mirth in one and the same place, at one and the same time.

Hasan's Ghost.—Yes, I observed that the bridegroom was broken-hearted in Karbalá, and that the bride had become brotherless at the time they were decorating her chamber. I was sweeping the floor of the bride-chamber like the wind, and expressed my good wishes, whilst thou didst sing.

Kásim's Mother.—O Hasan, for God's sake pity my condition! I am a widow bereaved of her children, and surrounded by her enemies, who are round about. Pray to God that He may take my soul to-night, for, after Kásim's death, I do not wish to live.

Hasan's Ghost.—Enter into thy tent, and mourn for my brother Husain, and endeavour meanwhile to take care of the fatherless children of the family. Never mind if Kásim be gone from thee; remember the awful Day of Resurrection, and grieve not that thy Kásim has been made a sacrifice for the sinful souls of God's people. Go and rest quiet in thy tent, disregarding the enemy altogether, for I am keeping watch in thy place to-night.

Fátimah's Ghost (*appearing to Kulsúm*).—My lost child Husain, my son, my son! my cruelly-curved tree, my son, my son! Thy wives are crying dolefully, my son, my son! Thy family are made contemptible and desolate, my child, my child!

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* See Scene IX.

Kulsúm.—O black phantom, what dost thou want from us? Leave these destitute, wandering creatures alone to themselves.

Fátimah's Ghost—The nightingale of the garden of affliction is flapping its wings, my singing-bird is complaining of the effect of the autumnal wind. I did not know that my Husain would arrive at Karbalá joyfully, but would pass his life most miserably therein. Be not frightened by this dark apparition, child, for thou shalt find this spectre very kind and affectionate to thee after all.

Kulsúm.—O black spectre, fear our efficacious and potent sighs; be not secure against our arrow-like sobs. My sword is the scymetar-like eye-brow of 'Alí Akbar. Beware, O apparition, of such a pair of swords as these.

Fátimah's Ghost.—Kulsúm, dear daughter, may I be a sacrifice for thy sorrow-nourishing heart! May my soul be a ransom for thy 'Alí Akbar! Why shouldst thou be afraid, and consider me as thine enemy, child? I am the best of all women,* thy virgin mother, darling.

Kulsúm.—O mother, thou who didst find no rest in thy life, listen to me, that I may explain to thee the truth of my condition. I saw Akbar's face become red with the blood which trickled from his head. I shall grieve for him until the Day of Resurrection, even for that handsome youth. I saw that Husain, being thirsty, was stabbed with daggers until he died. I saw, O dear mother, that this beautiful rose was ill-used as though he had been a thorn.

Fátimah.—Alas! they have put out the light of my heart, the lamp of my banquet is quenched through grief. O my sorrowful child, tell me, how dost thou feel in thy mind? for thy sobs, O anguished soul, have already set my heart in flames.

Kulsúm.—O mother, we are to-night in a destitute state,

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* See note *, p. 42, vol. i., and note, p. 57, vol. i.

and are miserably perplexed; at one time we moan, and at another time set up a loud lamentation. Thy fatherless children are much disturbed to-night in their minds. We are all in a distracted condition, disorderly, like the dishevelled locks of thy Husain.

Fátimah.—O my soul-pierced daughter, thou afflicted creature, retire to thy tent, and sit there with the poor orphans. Be still for a moment, and let me, instead of thee, sing elegies; rest thou quiet, and permit me to watch the tents to-night.

'Alí's Ghost.—'Alí is to-night a patrol in this camp; he is a guardian of these poor afflicted women.

Husain's Ghost.—Sukainah is lamenting, and Zainab is sobbing sadly. Husain, therefore, must guard the destitute wanderers in Karbalá.

Fátimah's Ghost.—Zainab will surely die from excess of sorrow and grief, for to-night her mother, the best among women, is keeping watch round her tent.

Zainab.—O women, the melancholy nightingale is not seen in the garden. Sukainah is sleeping in her bed, but Rukayyah is not to be found. Beat on your heads, and endeavour to afflict your souls with grief; make a sad noise, for the nightingale is gone from the garden.

Sukainah (*awaking*).—Why art thou deploring so, my broken-hearted aunt? The voice of thy lamentation has awakened me from my sleep.

Zainab.—Know that thy sister Rukayyah, she whose father has been slain, is missing, to thy great misfortune.

Sukainah.—O heaven, let me not again be lightly esteemed. I am amazed, not knowing where my poor sister has gone. Come, O sorrow-stricken Kulsúm, begin to lament; Rukayyah my sister is lost, be kind enough to find her out.

Kulsúm.—Render not my day as dark as night, O heaven. Tell me, Zainab, where did my Rukayyah sleep?

Zainab (*pointing to the place*).—O sister, it was here that fatherless orphan retired to rest. She was asleep, but she made continual mention of her father's name in her dreams.

Kulsúm.—Oh, what a miserable life poor orphans have to lead! My prayer to God is that none should ever happen to be in our desolate state. What family ever became such fugitives as we? Whose house was destroyed with such an utter destruction as ours?

Zainab.—Rukayyah is departed, and Zainab is extremely distressed. Go, Sukainah, and see if she is not with 'Abid-dín her brother.

Sukainah.—Help, O Zain-ul-'Abid-dín, our sister Rukayyah is lost; arise from thy place, rend thy garments, and give vent to grief.

Zain-ul-'Abid-dín.—Every child, having no father, is spurned by all men, and is at length overwhelmed with destruction from want of one to care for it.

Sukainah.—I have been to Zain-ul-'Abid-dín's tent, dear aunt, but my sister is not there; pray devise some means to find her.

Zainab.—Run, dear niece, to the tent of Kásim's mother, peradventure the poor fatherless child has gone there to sleep.

Sukainah.—O mother of Kásim, my sister Rukayyah, for whom I am troubled, is not to be seen. Tell me, O withered-hearted lady, if thou hast any tidings of my beloved sister.

Kásim's Mother.—How good would it be if a fatherless child's life were soon to come to an end! Had Rukayyah been a fortunate girl, she would not have become fatherless.

Sukainah.—Aunt, I cannot find a trace of my sister anywhere; help me, aunt, may the dust of the two world's be heaped on my head!

Zain-ul-'Abid-dín.—I have every hour a new fetter wherewith to be bound; every joint of mine gives a mournful sound like the flute. Where has my sister, my unhappy,

sore-hearted sister, gone, O Zainab? Oh, I do not know whither my ill-luck will, after all, carry me!

Zainab.—I do not know, dear nephew, where that afflicted creature has gone, I cannot tell to what spot that precious pearl has betaken herself. Father, uncle, and the girl herself, all are gone; what can I do, nephew, after my fortune has thus turned adverse?

Zain-ul-'Abid-dín.—O my sister Rukayyah, thou hast gone to the mountains at last. Thou hast died a stranger's death in the wilderness of this country. Had Rukayyah not lost her father, she would have been still alive, she would not have perished in this desert in such a dark night.

Zainab.—It is the beginning of Zainab's trials. Rukayyah is lost, to the shame and confusion of Zainab. Hasan confided the affairs of his family to my care. Come, now, O brother, behold how well Zainab has discharged her duty!

'Alí's Ghost.—O my sorrowful Zainab! groan not so much to-night, dear child, and be comforted. For what dost thou lament, O nightingale of my rose-garden? put an end to thy plaintive notes, my melancholy bird.

Zainab.—O 'Alí, our scar is irritated into a new sore, for the nightingale is lost. O father, it is for her sake I am thus distressed.

'Alí.—The fire of the orphan's sighs has kindled a flame in my heart, O child; I can tell where that featherless nightingale is. Rukayyah is in Husain's bosom; hasten there, and take her off from his lap.

Zainab (entering the field).—O women, I have found out where Husain's child is; I have discovered the source of a fresh lake of water, O thirsty ones; Husain's child is lying down in the field of battle; the planet that had been lost sight of is discovered in the vicinity of the moon. Come, O Rukayyah, lay thy head in my lap; thy absence has, dear niece, deprived me of patience, of intellect, of sense!

Kulsúm.—Why didst thou go out of the camp at such a time, my niece? What a girl thou art, to be my darling,

after all! O Zainab, it is now time to gather flowers from the garden of sorrow; it is time, O melancholy nightingale, to pour forth thy notes.

Zainab.—Sleep on, my miserable girl, sleep on; sleep on, my soul-stricken child, sleep on. Thou art rending thy clothes through grief, thou must be ready to be buffeted by Shimar. Thou hast had time enough for mourning, dear child; sleep on now, and take thy rest.

Kulsúm.—O my restless, thirsty creature, go to sleep, go to sleep! O my fatherless girl, go to sleep, go to sleep! O miserable, desolate girl, O heart-rent damsel, thou shalt dream about thy father; go to sleep, go to sleep!

SCENE XXV.

THE FIELD OF KARBALA AFTER THE DEATH OF HUSAIN.

THE troubles of Husain's family did not end with his death. Scarce had the Imám been slain and trampled under foot at Karbalá, than "Shemir next entered the tents, which he gave up to the pillage of his barbarous followers, who stripped the women of their very head-dresses and wearing apparel. Hearing the screams of these defenceless females, Omar Saud hastened to the spot, just at the moment when Ziljousheny, with his drawn sword, was approaching the bed of Ally the son of Hússeyne, then a child, languishing under pain and illness, with the intention of putting him to death. Omar seasonably demanded if he was not ashamed to be the butcher of an innocent and defenceless infant. 'My general Obaidullah Zeiaud's orders,' replied Ziljousheny, 'were that nothing male of the family should be left alive.'"—Price's "Chronological Retrospect of Mahommedan History," vol. i. p. 408, ed. 1811. The Scene closes with orders from Shimar to his army to lead the survivors of the family captive to Syria.

Zainab.—Heaven has at length consumed us with thirst. Our precious pearl has perished for want of water. The hands of 'Abbás* the brave were chopped off in the battle-field, so that he could not undertake any work for us. But 'Abid-dín,† though he be sick, yet he has some hope of life; as for us, the skirt of mystery or secrecy is gone away from our hand.

* See Scene XIX.

† See note †, p. 96, vol. i.

Kulsúm.—Heaven has made a poisonous autumnal blast blow over our rose-garden; the spheres have blotted out our trace from the surface of time! O heaven, it was not a light weight we had on our heart! Why shouldst thou add to our load of grief, and make additional burdens for us?

Zain-ul-'Abid-dín.—Why didst thou, O heaven, extinguish the light of our dark nights? Thou didst grieve our dear friend to please our most cruel enemy. Thou hast rent, O heaven, the veil of the Prophet's reputation. Thou has disclosed all our secrets.

Fátimah, the bride.—I do not know how our affairs will end, heaven is continually seeking our hurt. I have, as it were, no head and no pillow, since Kásim,* our beloved, has become a martyr by the sword of malice.

Sukainah.—Blood drops continually on my rosy cheeks from my streaming eyes, owing to the death of our beloved. O Lord, may he who is the cause of our burning sighs be consumed through the same.

Zainab.—Dear Sukainah, thou hast a troubled mind, thou art in great distress, poor thing. Put not the heart of the miserable family in a flaming state, nor let the foundation of patience be subverted by thy sighing and moaning.

Sukainah.—I have become, dear aunt, like a wingless and featherless bird. How can I forbear to groan, seeing I know nothing about my beloved companion? Since thou art bewailing, why should I not do the same? thou hast lost a son, as I have been deprived of a father.

Zainab.—O dear niece, let not torrents of blood-stained tears flow down from thy eyes. It makes my soul restless, as well as my heart impatient. O thirsty-lipped creature, let me not be deprived of peace through thy weeping: thy thirstiness does indeed draw water from my eyes, and makes me weep!

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* See Scene XVIII.

Sukainah.—My pain increases if I do not weep. My complaint is entirely against this inverted sphere. If my head-dress is dyed blue or black, it is made so by the indigo-coloured skies.

Zainab.—Why dost thou let torrents of blood run down from thine eyes? Why dost thou pour rose-water on thy colourless cheeks? Complain not, dear girl, of the unkindness of heaven, for thou hast, as yet, a beloved father by thy side.

Sukainah.—Speak not so, dear aunt, it is utterly impossible. I know the candle of my dark nights has gone out. I am become without a father, without Kásim, without Akbar,* without 'Abbás, all four are gone from me at once.

Zainab.—Be not grieved, thy father is gone home; thy red gem is gone back to its mine in the territory of Arabia Felix. Thy father has charged me in all respects concerning thee, for the few days of his absence.

Sukainah.—If this saying be true, why art thou thyself mourning? Why, dear aunt, art thou crying against injustice, oppression, and tyranny? Nay, my aunt, I doubt the truth of the assertion, owing to the black garments thou hast on; thou mayest be sure about it, but I have some suspicion.

Zainab.—Oh, let not thy curling hair be dishevelled, for thy royal hawk, O Sukainah, will soon fly back! My heart will also attain its object, and Zainab's face will beam with joy. Have patience, thy prayers will not be without effect; deliverance or death will soon come to thee.

Sukainah.—My spring, aunt, will no more be furnished with verdure, flowers, or fruit. I know no deliverance will come to me but death. The cypress† of my stature will henceforth bear no fruit, neither will my father come back: I shall never be fortunate.

Zainab.—Nay, do not think such sad things; the elegant cypress-tree will grow upright again; the waters that have

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* See Scene XVII.

† See note, p. 10, vol. i.

failed to flow shall once more have their usual course. Be not sorry. I last night dreamt a dream, and so interpret it, that Joseph brought to Egypt shall be raised to a great degree of honour.

Sukainah.—Speaking of thy dream, thou remindest me of sleep. Thou didst, O aunt, name water in the ear of one suffering from thirst. I feel so tired, dear aunt, from keeping watch, but in whose lap shall I lie down, or in whose bosom shall I repose?

Zainab.—My dear niece, the bosom of thy aunt is open like that of a rose full-blown; children require a cradle in the form of the nightingale's nest. If thou art inclined to sleep, lay thy head upon my lap. O Sukainah, thy hair is truly a bouquet like the hyacinth!

Sukainah.—I am going to sleep now; should my dear father return from his journey, or shouldst thou unexpectedly receive any letter from him, be pleased to awake me. If I be alive, I shall arise; but if I die while sleeping, I shall have been delivered from much sorrow.

Zainab.—Behold, O Husain, what a broken heart I have! I am not a little, but very greatly sorry for thee. Nay, *thou* hast no trouble at all, but *I* have not one care but a hundred anxieties.

*The Son of Sa'd.**—Listen, O cursed Shimar,† it is now time for injustice. It is the epoch of forgiveness for Nimrod‡ and Shidád. I have contrived a new plan, O Shimar, to torment the female captives of the family of Husain.

Shimar.—O son of Sa'd, please explain to me thy fresh means of oppression; if thou intendest to be tyranical, thou must try to be so in the extreme. Thou must draw a dash at once through the chapter of faith, and let the volume of the bright law of God lose its leaf-connecting seam.

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* See note, p. 214, vol. i. † See note, p. 43, vol. i.

‡ See note †, p. 177, vol. i., and note *, p. 50, vol. ii.

Ibn Sa'd.—Thou must put 'Abid-dín, the delicate son of Husain, in chains; thou must tie up Zainab and the children in bonds, and take them all to the place where the carnage has occurred, where the mutilated bodies of their beloved martyrs lie, that Husain's children may have full knowledge of the transaction. Arise, and go quickly! inform Zainab, that the afflicted woman may awake Sukainah from her sleep.

Shimar.—O Zainab, sigh and lament from the bottom of thy sorrowful heart. Shout out all thy shrieks at once. If thou wilt that I should not do thee any harm personally, then awaken her that is lying fast asleep in thy lap. Thou must soon be led to Damascus, bare-headed, and without any sheet to cover thyself withal; think for a moment what markets and streets thou wilt have to traverse!

Zainab.—O Sukainah, thou my thornless rose, awake! the accursed Shimar is troubling me—awake!

Sukainah (*awaking*).—Has the sun arisen from the east according to my hope? Has my father come back from his journey? Where is he? point him out to me, and let me also have a glance at my handsome brother 'Alí Akbar.

Shimar (*beating Sukainah*).—Come with me, Sukainah, I will lead thee to thy father. Come, I will take thee to a garden of roses, and a field of tulips. And ye women, walk out all to the field of slaughter; yea, go forth towards the plain with lamentations and sighs.

Sukainah.—The world is darkened to my sight, O black-faced wretch! tell me which way leads to the field of slaughter, that I may not lose the path, but walk straight forward to the spot. Yea, that we may go with lamentation and sighs to the place where the martyrs were slain.

Shimar.—Where thou see'st the land sprinkled with blood, where thou findest the ground bedewed with red fluid, thou mayest be certain that it leads to the scene where thy father was murdered. All these stories point to the interpretation of thy dream.

Zainab.—Dear Sukainah, did not I tell thee that thou shouldest soon be made glad? Did not I say to thee, dear Sukainah, that thou shouldest go to the presence of thy father? Come here, now, behold the dear face of thy parent. Come and see how thy father is lying in the sun, stript and naked.

Sukainah (in the battle-field).—Aunt, may I be a sacrifice for thee! whose is this elegant body drenched in blood? to whom do these dishevelled locks belong? There is no soundness in all this body from head to foot. Declare unto me, aunt, who can this unblown rose be?

Zainab.—It is thy Husain, niece, who is thus cruelly treated. Yes, whoever comes to this spot, must be, in some way or other, ill-used. Look, if thou art able, at his arched eye-brows, for it is a niche of prayer where all desire to attain their object.

Sukainah.—If this mutilated body, wallowing in blood, belong to my father, if my brilliant sun be buried in this twilight, then the period of my life has come to its final point, my last hour has arrived.

Zainab.—Yes, the person slain in this plain is thy Husain. This game that has struggled in blood and dust is thy father. This fish that is sunk in the sea of blood, whose wounds are more numerous than the stars, is thy Husain.

Sukainah.—Nay, this withered rose-bush cannot be my Husain. O aunt, why shouldst thou be in such a tremble? My father has a mark on his face.

Zainab.—What is the mark, O Sukainah? declare it to me. May I be a ransom for thee! explain it well, what is the mark?

Sukainah.—My father had four locks of hair when alive. He had soft black eyes like those of a gazelle. Dear aunt, every morning when I looked upon the face of Husain, I descried a black mole under his eye-brows.

Zainab.—Dear niece, behold the four locks of Husain in a dishevelled state! thou mayest detect in these locks the scent of thy father. Open thine eyes well, dear thing, and

observe carefully, the black mole under Husain's eye-brows is still to be seen beneath the clots of blood.

Sukainah.—O aunt, my father used, day and night, to read the Kur'án, and he served God continually all his life.

The Body of Husain (reading some parts of the Kur'án).—O desolate orphan, I am Husain thy father. I am the same who came to thee in thy dream. I am Joseph whose coat of many colours has been torn by wolf-like death, O thou burning taper of my tomb.

Ibn Sa'd.—Another thing has happened to flash across my mind. I have thought of a new plan of oppression. I have been reminded of a new fashion of torment. Call to me at once Yúnas the clerk.

Yúnas.—O thou whom Nimrod* cannot equal in tyranny, I am Yúnas the clerk, tell me why I have been summoned.

'Umar the son of Sa'd.—Thou, O Yúnas, must be well acquainted with this trying business, thou must have registered the names of the murderers and the murdered of Karbalá. Refer to the list in thy hand, and tell us with precision who has been killed and by whom.

Yúnas.—Yes, O chief, I have by thy order inscribed in a book the account of all the martyrs, and am therefore able to answer thee according to the tenor of thy questions in a most appropriate manner.

The Son of Sa'd.—Tell me by whose sword the elegant stature of Kásim the unhappy youth fell to the ground.

Yúnas.—O Amír, when Kásim the bridegroom rushed into the field, the cursed 'Umír made him a martyr with a malicious sword.

The Son of Sa'd.—Tell me, again, which stone-hearted man from among this army made 'Alí Akbar, the darling son of Husain, a martyr?

Yúnas.—O Amír, it was Nánkish the son of Marah who killed him, and deprived the helpless Zainab of all hope.

The Son of Sa'd.—Tell me, who brought cruelly a blast

* See note †, p. 177, vol. i.

on the blossom of mankind by chopping off the two hands of 'Abbás the brother of Husain?

Yúnas.—Know, O Amír, that it was the son of Tifl who cut off the hands of 'Abbás the brave.

The Son of Sa'd.—Tell me, who killed the sons of the mighty Ja'far, and who murdered Husain, the laudable one among the chosen?

Yúnas.—Know, O Amír, that when the armies began to fight desperately, I could not determine who killed the rest of those that were slain. It would sometimes happen that a thousand men attacked one single soul, or four thousand archers shot with their arrows at once, or that one body received a thousand wounds from different daggers in the hands of different men, and in this way I could hardly tell by whose stroke each died.

Ibn Sa'd.—Be prepared, O army, to take your vengeance, for the time has come that every affair should be perfectly decided. Go ye and sever the heads of the slain from their bodies, and raise thereby a cry of grief among the women of Husain.

Sinán (to Kulsúm).*—Come, thou sorrowful and scarred Kulsúm, sit down kindly by the side of thy 'Abbás, and see how, with my sharp-edged dagger, I will sever the head of 'Abbás thy brother from his elegant body.

Kulsúm.—O base man, cut not the head of my poor brother, none ever in the world does injury to the dead. It is enough thou hast chopped off the hands from his body, at least let his head remain untouched.

Shimar.—Come, Sukainah, throw the dust of this field of slaughter on thy head, groan, and heave fiery sighs from thy heart. Observe how, with the point of my steel dagger, I will sever the luminous head of Akbar thy handsome brother.

Sukainah.—I beseech thee not to dissever the head of my dear Akbar from the body. Yea, do not cut his throat

* See note ‡, p. 105.

with thy sharp dagger. Why dost not thou, with thy cruel sword, strike my head instead of this dear skull, already cloven asunder by the blow of a scymetar?

'Umír.—O bride of Kásim, commence crying; come forward and decorate the bed-chamber of the bridegroom. Rend thy garments, and behold how I will cut the head of Kásim the unhappy.

The Bride.—Oh! do not cut the head that could not rest on the pillow of joy and delight. Do not strike the head of one just returning from the marriage-feast. Do not wound the head that has fallen from the couch of rest. Yea, do not cut the throat of the bridegroom of the plain of Karbalá.

Shimar.—Come, sorrowful Zainab, thy day is become quite dark. Send up to heaven the arrow of thy soul-burning sighs. See how I will cut the throat of thy Husain. Yea, I am severing the head of thy world-adorning sun with my sword.

Zainab.—O cursed wretch, thou must not dissever with thy dagger the head which Zahrah, the Prophet's daughter, nourished in her bosom. He has already received one thousand nine hundred and fifty wounds in his body; what further need hast thou to cut his throat?

Shimar.—Know, O Amír, that we have performed the service thou didst order us. We have cut off and brought away the heads of all the martyrs. Look! there are plenty of dissevered skulls here. Order us, if there be further service to be done.

Ibn Sa'd.—Well done, good soldiers; thou hast truly performed your duty in cutting off the heads of the slain. Now, O Yúnas the clerk, look in thy register, and see if the heads be according to the account kept in thy book.

Shimar.—O Amír, of the children of the chosen Prophet we have seventeen * heads cut off in this plain of trial.

* Seventeen of the descendants of Fátimah were killed on the plain of Karbalá.—See Ockley's "History of the Saracens," vol. ii. p. 177, ed. 1757.

Of the family of 'Alí there is one head wanting. I wonder whose it can be?

Yúnas.—Besides these heads, there is another head mentioned in my book, that of 'Alí Asghar.

The Son of Sa'd.—I am not free from care even for one single hour. Tell me, why have you not cut that head too? You army of Kúfah, and men of Damascus, if a thing ought to be done at all, it ought to be done in a most perfect manner.

Shimar.—O impudent son of Sa'd, thou resentful, malicious creature, we could not find any other slain in the fields besides these. We have been looking about all over the plain, and cut off every head we could see.

Ibn Sa'd.—O ye warriors, return again to the field of battle, and seek on every side and in every corner thereof for 'Alí Asghar's body.

Sinán.—O prince, to be sure Asghar could not go away from among the dead. I can tell you where the tender child of Husain is to be found.

The Son of Sa'd.—Where is the body of that suckling? Tell me, where is the corpse of that thousand-trilled nightingale? Tell me, where is it? that I may sever the head, and raise a great disturbance in the universe by my tyranny.

Sinán.—Know, O prince, that when Asghar was made a martyr with an arrow,* Husain took his infant boy in his bosom, and went in the direction of the field of slaughter, towards his own camp. He buried his little 'Alí Asghar by the side of his tent.

The Son of Sa'd.—O army, that which was hidden is now revealed. The Joseph of Canaan who was lost is now found. You who boast the service of Yazíd, go now and excavate all the floor of the tent; discover the body of Asghar, the sweet-tongued child, in order to bring down, with your tyranny, the indigo-coloured dome of heaven.

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* See note, p. 174, vol. i.

Shimar.—I do not know where Haidar's * son hid his child's swaddling wrapper. I must dig the whole floor of the tent now to discover this hidden treasure.

Zainab.—O son of Sa'd, dost thou not fear God? Dost thou not care about the sighs and groans of Fátimah the Prophet's daughter? Be not so proud for the few days of this life. Be ashamed before God, O accursed, wicked wretch.

Sukainah.—Do not, O son of Sa'd, pull down our house. Do not grieve the souls of the poor ladies of Husain's family. I beseech thee not to dig up cruelly the tomb of 'Alí Asghar, but let the poor little child sleep for a while.

Kulsúm.—Do not go to this extent in your oppression, ye impudent nation! I beg you not to hurt us so much.

Shimar.—I am sure this is the spot where Asghar is buried, here is the wretched babe cut into a hundred pieces. O Amír, take 'Alí Asghar, and do with him as seemeth good to thee, but spare these destitute ones.

Ibn Sa'd.—It is my wish that the head of this child should be cut off; let one of you sever it from the body for me.

Zainab.—Do not do so, O 'Umar the son of Sa'd; what cruel conduct is this? How can it be lawful to mutilate a dead suckling?

The Son of Sa'd.—Cut its throat, and grieve the heart of its aunt. Hasten, I say, to sever the head of Husain's child. O ye ladies of Husain's household, you may torment me or punish me on the Day of Resurrection, Judgment, and Account if you can. Go and tell 'Alí and God's Messenger also everything that I have done towards you.

Kulsúm.—O Lord, look upon us in the abundance of Thy grace. Cure the painful disease of the heart of Husain's family. We are a company of women wandering

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* See note, p. 39, vol. i.

in mind, distressed in heart; have Thou mercy on the destitute women belonging to the king of the saints. They have killed all our men unjustly. Oh, pity these slain ones whose heads are severed from their bodies! Send Gabriel, O Lord, with a band of angels, and order them to guard these Thy martyrs.

The Son of Sa'd.—Thou oughtest, O Sinán, to sever the head of this suckling from its body with thy glittering sword.

Sinán.—How can I make the heart of the family of Husain bleed? I boast that I am a rational being; how can I do this brutal act? I shall never wound this babe with my dagger; if Shimar wishes, let him do it, but I will not.

Shimar.—Although of all of the inhabitants of Kúfah I am the most hard-hearted and cruel, yet I would not do this thing though I were to be killed. Why should I hurt this darling little throat? Why should I show malice and hatred to the dead?

The Son of Sa'd (to Sinán).—O Sinán, make no excuses to me at all; thou must at once cut off the head of 'Alí Asghar.

Sinán.—May God make my sword break into pieces, may points of daggers be thrust into my breast, may my body be hewn to pieces with daggers and scymetars, if I ever attempt to cut the throat of this suckling child!

The Son of Sa'd (to Khaulí).—Come forward, O Khaulí, and take this dagger from me; sever the head of this little child from the body.

Khaulí.—Shouldst thou, O Amír, order me to be beheaded, I could not even touch this throat with the tip of my dagger. Sinán must cut the throat of this suckling. I should never slay game already killed.

Sukainah.—Oh! bring not the sword in contact with my Asghar's throat. Sever not maliciously the head of my little brother from the body. May I be a ransom, O Asghar, for thy pallid face! May I be a sacrifice for

thy arrow-sucking lips! Sukainah is alive, whilst thou hast died by the point of an arrow. I do not know what thou hast done to these men that they should wish to cut thy throat.

'Umar the son of Sa'd.—Know, O Sukainah, that I have no fear of God before me. I myself will sever the head of the child from the body.

Sukainah.—Since thou hast determined to sever the head of this poor, innocent child, and seeing that this little one has been killed thirsty, and cruelly deprived of its life in this plain, give me time, O black-faced wretch, that I may pour a few drops of water down its parched throat to slake, if possible, its thirst. Oh, may thy sister be a sacrifice for thy throat! drink, dear 'Alí Asghar, drink. Come, let me clasp thee warmly in my bosom! Drink water, poor thing! thou art fainting from excessive thirst. Drink water, darling brother; though thy father was made a martyr thirsty. What shall I do, brother?

Ibn Sa'd.—See, O Zainab, how I have cut the throat of 'Alí Asghar. I will put his blood in a bowl, and drink it.

Shimar.—O ye army of Kúfah and Syria, lead the family of 'Alí captive to Damascus.

SCENE XXVI.

FLIGHT OF SHAHRBANU FROM THE PLAIN OF KARBALA.

THE death of Husain and most of his followers left the surviving members of his family in sore distress. Flight seemed the only resource open to them, more particularly in the case of Shahrbánú, the wife of the massacred Imám. She was the daughter of Yazdajird III., King of Persia, and naturally bethought herself to repair to her native country. "Shahrbánú came to Arabia a light-hearted girl, and returns to Persia a sad old woman." Sad indeed! Not only had she lost her husband and seen her child cruelly put to death before her eyes, but she herself quits the camp at Karbalá a desolate wanderer, fearing every moment that she may be captured by the enemy, who are seeking in all directions to lay hold on her. One gleam of light pierced the black cloud of her destiny—her son Zain-ul-'Abid-dín had escaped the massacre of all his kinsmen, but he lay sick of a fever which threatened to snap the thread of a life which had always been delicate and frail; yet he was destined to recover and perpetuate the memory of the house of 'Alí. In the emergency, however, his mother now leaves the sickly child to his fate, and, mounting her husband's horse, betakes herself on her perilous journey to her native land. "God be with thee," was the parting blessing of the spirit of her deceased husband, who, at the bidding of his distracted widow, had risen up and put the intercepting army to flight, thereby enabling her to escape the captivity which otherwise awaited her.

Zainab.—Thou, O heaven, continually excitest seditions, thou dealest with Zahrah's * posterity most maliciously, thou perversely hurtest the feelings of the generous for

* See note, p. 22, vol. i.

the pleasure of the men of this world. It is thy custom to separate brothers from sisters, to make Zainab a melancholy bird, owing to her Husain's death. Have patience until Zú'l janáh * returns from the field of battle, if thou intendest to send Zainab into captivity.

Sukainah.—My father, who went to the field of battle, has not yet returned. My heart is melting by reason of his absence, my soul is bleeding. Would to God my sighs would return to me with some effect! I wish I could hear something about my father.

Kulsúm.—O spheres, thou hast broken my wings with a cruel stone, thou hast made mountains and plain become seas owing to the abundance of my tears. Thanks unto thee, O heaven, I wish thee joy and prosperity; thou hast seven times dyed my head-dress indigo.

Shahrbánú.—I am, O heaven, Shahrbánú † the wife of Husain. I am a daughter-in-law to the Prophet's daughter, but am now a widow. My husband is slain, and my fortune has departed. Whither shall I turn my face, being thus perplexed and distressed?

Zainab.—Dear Husain being killed, I am rendered altogether helpless. My fir-tree being hewn down, I am made a fruitless tree. Mourning is become a never-ending task for me; I can do nought but complain against my fate, O heaven.

Sukainah.—Alas! I cannot say what has become of my father Husain; he has neither himself arrived, nor has a messenger come from him. Does one who goes on a journey never return? The evening of those who sojourn has no morning after it.

Shahrbánú.—I have lost all patience, O my God, being bereaved of my dear son Akbar. I am humbled, and brought very low in the land of Karbalá. Thou knowest,

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* See note, p. 242, vol. i.

† See note, p. 70.

O God, that I am the descendant of Khusrau Parwíz,* King of Persia.

Sukainah.—O women of the haram, have pity on my tearful eyes, for I suffer painfully from the absence of my father. Where shall I go, and what shall I do, this long night of separation? I am so grieved, so overwhelmed with sorrow now, that I cannot express it. (*The women are silent.*) It is not proper to disregard poor orphans' words. How is it, my aunt, that thou dost not answer my questions? Since nobody has any affectionate regard for me, I will retire to the mountains, and live there a secluded life.

Zainab.—Alas! fortitude has left my heart. My rose being gone from the garden, the nightingale has also departed. I mean that Husain's child Sukainah, being disturbed in her mind, has gone from my presence.

Sukainah.—O zephyr, bid my father return and behold my wretched condition. Thou dost not know, O father, how sad is my state; sorrow has made me as slender as a new moon. Zainab my aunt does not deign to answer me, though every word of mine must reach her ears.

Zainab.—O child who hast prepared thyself to die, O bird which art caught in a snare; be not offended by thy aunt, darling. Return to the camp, return; vex me no more.

Sukainah.—O aunt, increase not my pains; I will in no wise return to the camp. Let me alone, that I may die in misery; persuade me not to go back with thee to the tent.

Zainab.—O child who hast not experienced any of the delights of this world, have patience; rend not thy garments sorrowfully, and do not go alone in this wilderness.

Sukainah.—I do not love anyone else except my father, nor do I wish to see anyone besides him. I have no friend but God, and have nothing to do with thee, O aunt. I shall pass my time with the wild beasts of the desert, and

* Khusrau Parwíz ascended the throne of Persia A.D. 590. He was an ancestor of Yazdajird III., the father of Husain's wife Shahrbánú.

birds of the air, and will not henceforth see any human face.

Zainab.—O light of my two eyes, thou bird that art going away from the garden, heave not warm sighs from thy heart. Return to the camp, return; I will wash thy face with rose-water, and answer every word of thine. Come back, that I may disclose a secret to thee, and inform thee as to thy father.

Sukainah.—I will come to the camp, aunt, but I feel extremely sad. Oh, may my soul be a ransom for thee! show me my father.

Zainab.—Beat not on thy head, girl, nor trouble thyself so much. May I be a sacrifice for thy heart! come and sit in my lap.

Sukainah.—O my dear aunt, I cannot live a moment without my father; show me him, I beseech thee.

Zainab.—O Shahrbánú, how long wilt thou remain in the tent? Come out. Think of Zainab, whose life is become a burden to her. Oh! deliver me from the hand of Sukainah thy daughter, for I am sore vexed by her; either help me to get out my skirt from her hand, or pray to God to take my soul from me.

Shahrbánú.—O oppressed child, why art thou thus moaning and sighing? Why hast thou scratched thy rosy cheeks, my girl? Sit in my lap, and see my sad condition. Put me not to shame before my companions, darling daughter.

Sukainah.—Have compassion on my tender age, mother; make me hear the adventures of my father. Where is my worthy sire, that conqueror of armies, that vanquisher of troops? Where is that dear soul of mine, that spirit of my life?

Shahrbánú.—O God, how long must I be consumed with anguish of heart? How long shall I conceal the secret? Thy father will soon return to thee, my pretty little child; he will come to thee in a manner like the moon in the heavens.

Sukainah.—I beseech thee, O my sorrowful and impatient mother, when thou see'st the dear face of my beloved father, ask him the reason of his delay; and if he be thirsty, if my precious pearl want water, be thou pleased to lead him to the source of the Euphrates. Be thou a Khizr * to lead Alexander to the fountain of life.

Shahrbánú.—Go to the tent, dear child; wait not for thy father. If thou wishest to speak of water, first fill thy eyes with tears, because they do not allow thy father to drink water; they have broken our hearts through denying us a few drops of liquid.

Sukainah.—Why should the heavens continue their revolutions if my father is not going to return from the field? I trust my mother Shahrbánú will not return from the field alone and empty-handed.

Shahrbánú.—I am become like a flute, possessing various notes. I have a thousand complaints against the transactions done in Karbalá. Where hast thou gone, O Husain? Pray apprise me of it. Come back, come back, for all my hopes are centred in thee.

Sukainah.—I am one who, having once had many faithful friends, am now deprived of all, and have no companion except God. Thou alone, O father, wast the cure of my diseased heart. Come now, and see how irremediable my case has become.

Shahrbánú.—If thou art made a martyr, send, then, thy horse to me, for I have, O Husain, many strange things to-day to do. Do not permit, dear husband, that I should become a captive in the hand of the wicked Shimar, for I terribly fear that impudent man.

Husain's Body (addressing his horse).—O Zú'l janáh, behold the queen of all ladies standing there with distressed face towards the fields, waiting for thee. Stain,

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* Khizr is supposed to have found out the fountain of life and drank thereof, whereby he became immortal.

therefore, thy face with my blood, and go to her that she may perceive the rider has fallen from thy back. Seat her on the saddle, and, taking her out of the field, carry her where God has permitted thee to go. (*Zú'l janáh comes towards Shahrbánú.*)

Shahrbánú.—O Zú'l janáh, why are thy mane and hair all stained with blood? Thy face looks like a tulip; tell me, where is thy fair rider gone? O Sukainah, Sukainah, march out of the tent, and see thy father's easy-paced Zú'l janáh coming to thee.

Sukainah (*seeing Zú'l janáh coming towards her*).—O Zú'l janáh, what hast thou done with my good-natured father? Where hast thou thrown my heavenly-looking parent. Oh! since thy face is dyed with Husain's blood, let me kiss thy hair, and rub my face on thine.

Zainab.—O charger of Husain, why didst thou trot to the field of battle? Why didst thou make my brother fall from thy back? Where is thy rider, the equestrian hero, gone? Oh! let me put my head on thy saddle-cloth, and be somewhat relieved.

Sukainah.—What hast thou done with Husain, that shining moon? What hast thou done with the rose of the garden of faith?

Zainab.—Thou didst take Husain to the field, but hast not brought him back. What hast thou done with my Solomon, O lapwing?*

Shahrbánú.—Return to the tent, O ye two singing-birds of the meadow, and be silent, leaving Zú'l janáh to me. The time has come for me to make a sad noise like the flute, and, getting on the back of the charger, to go from Kúfah to Ray.† (*Shahrbánú mounts the horse.*)

Sukainah.—O my worthy, good-tempered, but sorrowful mother, tell me whither thou dost intend to ride. Do not

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* See note, p. 143, vol. i.

† Ray, a town in the neighbourhood of Kaswín, was in former days a place of much repute in Persian 'Irák, and a hot-bed of Shí'ah fanaticism.

go away as my affectionate father did; let not the nest of this poor bird be more and more disturbed.

Shahrbánú.—May I be an offering for thy beautiful stature, O child! May I be a sacrifice for the curl of thy ringlets, O daughter! Return to the tent; I am not going anywhere. I will not depart, my darling, since thou dost not like it.

Sukainah.—If, O mother, thou dost not resolve to go anywhere, why do I see thee thus thoughtful? How is it that, if thou meanest nothing, thou dost not dismount from Husain's horse?

Shahrbánú.—Wait a bit, my child, my destitute orphan darling, that I may go the slaughter-place of my beloved ones to see if Asghar is well nursed and at rest; to look if there is anyone to take care of that cruelly murdered infant.

Sukainah.—Oh, do not talk thus to me! I am not so stupid as not to know somewhat; my experience comprehends all things that are in heaven and earth. Thy Asghar has not fed on milk, loving mother, but on sharp arrows; he is no longer fit to come into thy bosom, kind mother.

Shahrbánú.—Have patience, then, dear child, until I go to the field of battle and bury 'Alí Asghar, with my own hand, in the earth.

Sukainah.—Alight, Shahrbánú, and trouble me no more, for now my father is gone I have but a sad and sorrowful heart. It is not proper that my 'Alí Asghar should be interred in the earth; let the poor creature be transported at once to the garden of Paradise.

Shahrbánú (dismounting).—Alas! I shall be debased in this generation. Though I am a rose, it seems I am about to become a thorn in this plain; very good, child, I will do just what thou hast said, I will alight, and be cut to the quick.

Sukainah.—May I be a ransom for thy beautiful stature draped in black! I wish that thou mayest sit down a little, in order that I may place my head on the top of thy

shoulder, but I fear lest thou shouldst leave me alone and forsake me as soon as I have fallen asleep.

Shahrbánú.—Sleep in my lap, thou nightingale of the rose-garden of my soul; come into my bosom, my pretty delicate bud. Do not be so uneasy as to my departure. I will not go anywhere whilst thou art asleep, dear Sukainah.

Sukainah.—I am going to sleep, but I know this sleep will render me despicable, I shall not see Shahrbánú when I awake. My father has left me, my mother is also going away. I shall be led a captive to Syria and be made miserable there.

Shahrbánú.—My abode, now that Akbar is dead, shall be in a cave in the mountains of Ray. My dear Sukainah shall go to Damascus and be put to shame in that city. She shall pass bare-headed in the streets and bázárs, to the aggravation of Zainab's sorrow.

Zainab.—Sukainah, after an hour, will awake from her sleep, and not finding her mother with her, will set up a doleful lamentation, such as to make 'Abid-dín forget his fever; owing to the absence of Shahrbánú, Sukainah is in distress, and Zainab is once again afflicted.

Shahrbánú.—Oh! who will help me in this my miserable plight? Oh! who will sympathise with me in my calamity? Would that someone would come and hold Sukainah's head in her lap when I am gone. O Zainab, the time has come for me to set out on my journey. Give my love, dear sister, to Akbar and Asghar when I am departed.

Zainab.—O my respected and faithful sister, contrive some plan for me what to do after thou art gone; when thy daughter awaketh and calleth me, what shall I answer her?

Shahrbánú.—Sukainah being a child, thou canst easily beguile her with some fantastic story; in this way the girl may be pacified and thy heart be relieved from its irremediable pain.

Zainab.—Heaven, instead of helping Zainab, has poured

contempt on her; heaven surely is mistaken in this wrong dealing with me. I cannot get my pain mitigated by patience. I think, therefore, that whoever endureth meekly in this assembly will be the loser.

Shahrbánú.—O desolate Zainab, I cannot forget thee even for a minute; thou hast been kind to me, both in Madínah and in this place. I, being a stranger, have received much honour and respect from thee. Now, my soul being extremely sorrowful, I have but one request to make to thee.

Zainab.—Oh, I am much obliged to thee for thy kind words; better make no mention of those things to my shame and confusion. Poor creature! what didst thou experience in our house except vexation and grief? and in Karbalá what but oppression and cruelty? I adjure thee, by the lustrous curls of 'Alí Akbar, pardon my faults and overlook my evil doings. What is now thy request? let thy servant hear it, for I am but a slave of thy dear 'Alí Akbar.

Shahrbánú.—Oh! make no mention of 'Alí Akbar to kindle a fire within me. Ah! may I die for him, grief is going to burn the very marrow of my bones. My request, O my sore-hearted one, is that thou shouldst kindly accompany me to the field of slaughter, where I intend to seek the body of my dear 'Alí Akbar, to smell his scented locks, and to give him some farewell kisses.

Zainab.—Come, let us go, that we may fetch salt and sprinkle it on our bleeding wounds! Come, let us start for the garden, since it is the spring season. Come, let us visit our beloved companions, and have a walk in the rose-garden of Karbalá. Come, and behold where the tulips have grown, even under the body of thy youthful son.

Shahrbánú (addressing the body).—O beloved of my heart, why has thy body fallen in the sun naked? thou second Joseph, tell me what became of thy coat of many colours?

Zainab (to the body).—All thy body is reddened with the blood of thy head, dear nephew. Thy meadows are all green, but thou hast not yet sat* in the bride-chamber.

Shahrbánú.—Come, 'Alí Akbar, and see how I am journeying. Alas, may I die for thee! I could not stay to have thee properly wrapped up in winding-sheets.†

Zainab.—Speak out, dear nephew, for sweet are thy words! open thine eyes, darling, may I be a sacrifice for thy sweet eye-lids!

Ibn Sa'd.—My fortune is at all times good and agreeable; all the hidden things of the world are plainly known to me. O army of Kúfah,‡ that poor Shahrbánú intends to flee away through fear; set out at once, all of you, and lie in ambush for her on her way to whatever place or country she may be going. Pursue her hard until you make a captive of her, and put her in great consternation. (*The army search on all sides.*)

Zainab.—Do not beat on thy head so much, Shahrbánú; arise from thy place, O nightingale, cease lamenting for thy rose. Mount the Zú'l janáh, and carry away thyself from this wilderness; get thee on shore from this blood-stained sea of trial.

Shahrbánú (riding).—O prisoner of Karbalá, thou poor despised Zainab, I go, dear sister, but thou shalt be made a captive. If it be agreeable to thee, sing a song over Akbar, and keep, if possible, the ceremony of mourning for him. Should it happen to thee to go to his tomb by way of affection, I pray thee perfume his hair with musk and ambergris. Seeing my Asghar, at the time of his departure, was thirsty and had not been nursed, I beg thee pour some milk and water over the dust of my infant's tomb. Adieu, sister Zainab, I am going away now; Shahrbánú came to Arabia a light-hearted girl, and returns to Persia a sad old woman.

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* See note †, p. 77. † See note, p. 27, vol. i.

‡ See note, p. 9, vol. i.

Zainab.—I am burning, from head to foot, with the fire of my sighs. O daughter-in-law of Fátimah, art thou going away? depart in peace. Thy Akbar and Asghar have remained here whilst thou art going away; thou mayest depart, O star, leaving thy sun and moon behind.

*Zain-ul-'Abid-dín.**—O Shahrbánú, why didst thou not come and caress thy son 'Abid? thou hast forsaken thy invalid child altogether. Thou hast paid visits to the dead and living except to me; thou hast seen all, dear mother, except thy son Zain-ul-'Abid-dín. Thou art regardless, O sweet-faced lady, of poor me; thou thoughtest I must have gone from the world by this time.

Shahrbánú.—May I be a ransom for thy dull and troubled spirits! may my soul be a sacrifice for thy soft eyes! So long as I am alive, thou shalt not be forgotten by me. I am much abashed before thee, my poor invalid 'Abid. I am going away, child; pardon if thou hast experienced any unkindness at my hands, and be thou so good as to think of thy mother now and then.

Zain-ul-'Abid-dín.—May I be a ransom for thee, O good-looking mother! I have many complaints against thee, dear parent. Although I am obliged to thee for the care thou hast taken of me, still thy 'Abid must have been dead or alive; in either case it was necessary thou shouldst pay him a visit affectionately.

Shahrbánú.—May I be a ransom for thy ruby-like, delicate, sweet lips! May God enable thee to recover from thy illness, that thou mayest have strength enough to endure the sorrow of the time, and receive blows from the hand of the profligate Shimar.

Zain-ul-'Abid-dín.—O my faithful mother, after thou art gone, who will attend on me?

Shahrbánú.—Be not anxious about that, O 'Abid, Zainab will take care of thee. My invalid son, thy aunt will be good enough to nurse thee in thy illness.

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* See note †, p. 96, vol. i.

Zain-ul-'Abid-dín.—Grieve me not with thy departure, dear mother; do not go, do not go! Leave me not behind, a companion of sorrow; do not go, dear parent, do not go! The violence of fever, good mother, has brought my soul to the tip of my lips; oh! have me first buried, dear mother, and then depart.

Shahrbánú.—Go from behind me, child; do not come, do not come! O thou our solace and companion night and day, do not come, do not come! I am going from thy sight; thou canst no longer see me with thy eyes; in vain thou art endeavouring to follow me; do not come, do not come!

Zain-ul-'Abid-dín.—O Shahrbánú, thou art gone, leaving thy invalid son 'Abid behind in Karbalá. Oh! I am left here destitute of all friendly help, woe be to me! come and save me, my mother!

Shahrbánú (*departing in a certain direction, and the wicked party firing at her*).—Throw me not into the hands of the antagonist, O heaven! I am the consort of 'Alí's son, rub thy eyes and see better. The enemy is lying in wait to make a captive of me; where is my Akbar, that he may save me from the hand of the enemy? (*Turning in another direction and being also fired at.*) Alas! where is the tranquiliser of my agitated heart? I am without a companion or friend; where is my dear companion gone? Where is Kásim? what has become of 'Abbás? where is my general, the commander of the army? (*Turning in a third direction and receiving the same treatment.*) In whatever direction I turn, the enemy does not allow me to pass; I fear lest I should unfortunately be put to shame. I am but a single weak body, and the foe is in every corner; there is no friend, no kind companion, to defend me. Where shall I go, O merciful Creator, or what shall I do? I am terribly perplexed in my mind, hardly knowing how to escape. (*Moving in another direction and hearing the sound of troops, she lays her head on the saddle.*) I will now deliver myself from sorrow, and turning my face to Kar-

balá, cry aloud, saying, "O Husain, behold my condition, and come out to my help; O Husain, I am in a destitute state, make haste to save me!"

Husain (*appearing as a horseman and putting the army to flight*).—O thou whose son was lately killed, have no fear of this multitude at all, for this numerous army is but as dust before me.

Shahrbánú.—If thou art the guide of my path, I shall have no fear of the enemy. May the Prophet Khizr direct thee in all thy ways, O young man!

Husain.—I see thou art shedding hot tears, and heaving cold sighs.

Shahrbánú.—My moaning and weeping are for the death of my unfortunate son 'Alí Akbar.

Husain.—I ask thee a question for which I expect from thee a fair answer. Is Akbar better than the Prophet's elect, or are the elect people more precious than thy beloved?

Shahrbánú.—Of course the elect people are better, inasmuch as they are the people of Muhammad the Prophet.

Husain.—Complain not then that thy Akbar is made a ransom for the salvation of this people, who in reality are better than many Akbars and Asghars.

Shahrbánú.—I do not complain, but yield assent; nevertheless, the smarting pain of these scars will remain in my heart and breast until the Day of Resurrection.

Husain.—Why is thy hair dishevelled and thy face scratched? O unfortunate woman, what has made thee throw ashes* on thy head?

Shahrbánú.—It is a custom with women deprived of their children and husbands, to cut their hair, to scratch their faces, and to beat on their heads.

Husain.—Thou art right, O woman; moan as much as

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* See note *, p. 11, vol. i.

thou likest. How can a bird rendered wingless and featherless do otherwise than cry from oppression?

Shahrbánú.—Who art thou, O young man, whose voice is so familiar to my ears? I think thou art the angel Gabriel, for I see wings on thy body.

Husain.—O Shahrbánú, I am Husain, thy husband Husain; the wounds thou see'st are the effect of arrows and daggers.

Shahrbánú.—I wish I had become blind rather than see thee in this condition. How could such a delicate body receive the wounds of spears and lances?

Husain.—The smart of these wounds shall in time be made easy and tolerable, but I have another calamity which is still worse than this.

Shahrbánú.—May my soul be an offering to avert calamities from thy soul! declare unto me what is that painful affliction which is yet more unendurable than these heavy woes.

Husain.—The heaviest of all my afflictions is this, that thou art going away, leaving my Sukainah fatherless and motherless.

Shahrbánú.—I am going, dear husband, but my motto shall, until the Day of Judgment, be, Asghar, Asghar! Akbar, Akbar!

Husain.—Why art thou pouring tears so copiously, and what prevents thee from remaining in Husain's Karbalá? O my matchless companion, who will affectionately stroke Sukainah's hair after thy departure?

Shahrbánú.—Thy Sukainah, whom heaven has made so miserable, has one in the person of Zainab to take care of her instead of me her mother.

Husain.—Oh! thou dost grieve me painfully with this thy saying. How well didst thou keep the ceremony of Akbar's marriage at Karbalá! How strangely didst thou dye thy dear hands with henna! *

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* See note ‡, p. 118, vol. i.

Shahrbánú.—If I die not, but live, and safely arrive at the mountain of Ray, I shall there decorate a wedding-room for Akbar, ornamenting it, provided I live, with beautiful flowers, even the flowers which heaven has lately cast in the river Euphrates!

Husain.—Tell me, how was Zainab when fate snatched Akbar from the midst of my family?

Shahrbánú.—After thy death, Zainab's abode was a house of mourning. She has been like a moth, fluttering around thy children, thy orphan children.

Husain.—Oh! my troubles are more than those of any sufferer; tell me, in what condition is 'Abid my poor son?

Shahrbánú.—'Abid is like a flaming candle, burning with fever, and it is difficult to say whether he will recover his health again.

Husain.—O Shahrbánú, I am plunged in fire and water on thy account. I am distressed owing to the troubles thou hast suffered whilst with me; after losing 'Alí Akbar, thy unfortunate son, thou hadst the misfortune to see my death; thou hast never gathered any flower of rest out of my garden. Thy palm tree of hope has become suddenly fruitless in Karbalá. Well, O my horse Zú'l janáh, carry my wife where she likes.

Shahrbánú.—Adieu, then, O Husain; be thou 'Alí Akbar's companion, and visit him every day after I am gone. Wipe off the dust of the battle-field which has settled on his rosy cheeks, and, digging a tomb for him, have that treasure buried under the earth.

Husain.—God knows, O Shahrbánú, that I feel very sorry for thee! O daughter-in-law of Fátimah, thou art gone, God be with thee!

SCENE XXVII.

HUSAIN'S FAITHLESS CAMEL-DRIVER.

After the massacre of Husain's family on the plain of Karbalá the Syrian army retire, leaving one individual, the Imám's camel-driver, alone amidst the corpses of those slain in battle. The greedy wretch solaces himself with the thought that he will be able to plunder the dead bodies of some valuables to make amends for his loss of service. While in search of his booty he is joined by another ignoble wretch from the enemy's army, bent on a similar errand. The latter manages to take the ring off Husain's finger; the camel-driver makes every attempt to snatch a valuable belt studded with jewels which his master used to wear round his waist, but the hand of the deceased martyr miraculously guards the coveted treasure, and the villain fails in four attempts to rob his master.

The Scene now changes; and Sulaimán, chief of the tribe of Baní Khuzá'ah, appears with his army ready to render assistance to Husain, under the impression that the latter is still alive and defending himself at Karbalá. While on the point of starting, a messenger arrives from the Imám imploring the monarch's aid. Sulaimán readily consents. "Should I remain thus cheerful whilst Husain is in that extremity of trouble? Is such behaviour to be expected from any one who is courageous and manly?" On his way to Karbalá an Arab appears and announces the destruction of Husain and all his troops. Too late therefore to be of any assistance as regards the Imám himself, the king orders his troops to get ready "to fight against the ill-starred Shimar, until death or victory shall decide the case." The Scene closes, leaving the noble-hearted Sulaimán at the head of his army marching to overtake the prisoners on their way to captivity in Syria.

The Camel-Driver.—What shall I do, O heaven, now I am forsaken by the army? I am become a companion of grief, of sorrow, of pain, and of sobs. All the Syrian troops have retired with the spoils of the enemy; they have gone away without a thought for others. How can I now, being empty-handed, and on foot, go home? Or what shall I say to my family when I arrive? I see no other course but to pass amongst the slain, and search, with straining eyes, for some shirts to take away, or some winding-sheets to steal

Bajdat the son of Sálim (entering the field from the opposite side).—Alas! O companions, what shall I do? How am I to find Husain's body in this field of battle, and pull off the ring from his finger, and thereby add sorrow to his sorrow? (*Meeting the camel-driver.*) Whence comest thou, O young man? and whither dost thou intend to go? What art thou seeking among these martyrs?

The Camel-Driver.—Know that I am the camel-driver of Husain, the king of God's martyrs; yet, with all my soul and heart, I am on friendly terms with the party of Yazíd.* In this journey I became a servant to Husain, serving him as a camel-driver for the sake of plunder, hoping, when Husain should become a martyr, to have plenty of spoils out of his property.

Bajdat.—Do not say such things, thou inhuman wretch. Is there no zeal in thee at all? Hast thou not received favours from that king of religion? How is it, then, that thou hast so ungratefully withdrawn from his service?

The Camel-Driver.—Yes, I have received many acts of kindness from that royal personage, and heard numberless kind words from him. 'Abbás† would often give me of his own bread and water, and frequently relieved me in my distress and pains. 'Alí Akbar‡ the son of Husain was

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* See note †, p. 17, vol. i.

† See Scene XIX.

‡ See note, p. 8, vol. i.

very good to me; and Kásim* clothed me in his own coat. This shawl and veil are Zainab's own, she gave them to me as presents for my wife; and these are the clothes of Asghar,† with which his mother kindly presented me to carry to my children.

Bajdat.—God curse thee and turn thy face black! Thou hast received so many benefits from that king of religion, and experienced so much kind treatment from that sacred family; how is it that thou hast not offered thy soul at his holy feet, thou ungrateful rascal? Well, tell me now, what has brought thee here to this field of slaughter, thou cruel camel-driver?

The Camel-Driver.—Know thou that Husain, the beautiful rose of Zahrah's ‡ garden, had a pair of trousers, which, whenever he intended to make his ablutions, he used to consign to my care to keep for him till the ceremony was over. This same pair of trousers had a band with some jewels appended to it. I have come to take that band off his trousers. Wilt thou also tell me who thou art, in order to relieve me from the fetters of sorrow?

Bajdat.—Be assured, O man, that I am Bajdat the son of Sálim. O cursed and reprobate man, I am one of those who have respect for Yazíd; in fact, I am one of his subjects. At the time that I dragged Husain's body in blood I observed a beautiful ring on his finger. I have therefore come to take it off his hand, and to add to his many griefs a new sorrow.

The Camel-Driver.—Come, let us make a search among the slain, and see what we can find in this field to our advantage.

Bajdat (pointing to the body of 'Abbás).—I cannot tell who is this pleasant-looking moon.

The Camel-Driver.—This headless and handless body belongs to 'Abbás.

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* See note, p. 160, vol. i. † See note, p. 174, vol. i.

‡ See note, p. 22, vol. i.

Bajdat.—Oh! do not throw his hand on the ground in such a way, it will break.

The Camel-Driver.—He has given me water with this very hand.

Bajdat (*pointing to 'Alí Akbar's body*).—Who is this youth thus weltering in his own blood?

The Camel-Driver.—This is 'Alí Akbar, the sweet-tongued youth.

Bajdat.—Why art thou throwing dust on the body?

The Camel-Driver.—Because he has been very kind to me, and has done me much good.

Bajdat (*pointing to Kásim's body*).—I do not know who is this unhappy youth.

The Camel-Driver.—Know this is Kásim the bridegroom, the son of Husain.

Bajdat (*pointing to 'Alí Asghar's body*).—I cannot tell what is the name of this musky-haired infant.

The Camel-Driver.—This suckling's name is 'Alí Asghar.

Bajdat.—Oh! do not beat it thus on the ground.

The Camel-Driver.—Thus I do in order that its mother's heart should burn.

Bajdat (*pointing to Husain's body*).—Whose body is this thus cut to many pieces with swords and spears?

The Camel-Driver.—It is the body of Husain, of Husain, of Husain!

Bajdat.—Oh! do not kick it so much on the throat.

The Camel-Driver.—I must have his face and hair soiled with dust.

Bajdat.—O young man, I cannot take off the ring from Husain's hand, though I have tried my best so to do.

The Camel-Driver.—Thou shouldest know that the body of Husain, the thirsty-lipped * king, through the cruelty of the ignoble enemy, has been exposed to the heat of the sun; every member of his body has therefore swollen.

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* See note, p. 14, vol. i.

Thou must accordingly cut off the Imám's finger, and take away the ring.

Bajdat (*taking off the ring*).—Know, O young man, that after a great many endeavours, I have taken off the ring from Husain's hand; I have achieved my object. O cursed wretch, go thou also to thy work in Yazíd's name.

The Camel-Driver (*coming to Husain's body, and finding him miraculously holding the band of his trousers*).—Alas! a hundred times alas! Husain, the chief of God's creatures, has laid his hand on the band of his trousers. By what means can I now carry out my intention? Oh! I see no other remedy than cutting off the hand of this manifest Imám. Let me go and get something wherewithal to break down the pillar of God's religion. (*He roves about in the field.*) I cannot find any instrument sharp enough for the purpose. Let me, then, cut off his hand with this blunt sword already broken in two pieces. O Husain, take off thy hand from the band of thy trousers, otherwise I shall cut it off in a ruthless manner.

The Body of Husain (*hearing the threat*).—God is great, God is great! (*The camel-driver makes a second attempt.*) I am a witness that there is no other God but God! I am a witness that there is no other God but God! (*The camel-driver makes a third attempt.*) I am a witness that Muhammad is an apostle of God! I am a witness that Muhammad is an apostle of God! (*The camel-driver makes a fourth attempt.*) Alas! a hundred times alas! the camel-driver has come. The enemy of my sore, distressed spirit has arrived. Look upon me, O God; what shall I do to escape from the hand of this cursed wretch?

The Camel-Driver.—Take away thy hand from the band, O Husain, otherwise I shall cut it off in a cruel manner.

The Body of Husain.—Do not sever my hand from my body, and make my heart burn in flames. O tyrant, reverence the face of the Prophet.

The Camel-Driver.—I have no respect for the Prophet at all.

The Body of Husain.—Do not perform a deed which will cause the throne of God to be overturned.

The Camel-Driver.—I will cut it, even if the whole universe be thereby shattered.

The Body of the Imám.—I am a believer, O cursed wretch; I am not an infidel.

The Camel-Driver.—I do this as a requital for the kindness thou hast shown me.

The Body of Husain.—Do not perform an action which will make Zahrah thine adversary.

The Camel-Driver.—These words cannot soften my heart.

The Body of Husain.—Why art thou faithless in reference to my father 'Alí?

The Camel-Driver.—I do not know who 'Alí is.

The Body of Husain.—Hast thou no fear either of God or of the Day of Judgment?

The Camel-Driver.—I have no fear of God, nor do I care about the Day of Reckoning.

*King Sulaimán-al-Khuzá'ah.**—Had I any news about the occurrences in Karbalá, I would give forth, day and night, musical sounds like the organ-pipe. I wish I had been this very hour in Karbalá, the capital of Husain, the king of the oppressed ones. If I had set that pilot of faith always before my face, I should not have suffered shipwreck in the sea of sorrow and affliction. Although I am a king, I wish I could appear now and then like a beggar at the court of the monarch of Karbalá.

The Prime Minister of Sulaimán.—Why art thou moaning and sobbing, O exalted king? Why art thou making the desert a sea with the tears of thine eyes? Thou being Sulaimán, the emperor of the tribes of Arabs, why shouldst thou make such a sad noise like a melancholy bird?

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* The Baní Khuzá'ah, a tribe in Arabia, were stout partizans of the Prophet Muhammad.

Sulaimán.—I am not complaining against the treacherous spheres without cause. I am not fighting with heaven and earth for no reason. I fear lest I should behold Husain become a martyr by the edge of the sword of some enemy. On this account I ask God to give me a sudden death.

The Prime Minister.—Lay hold on patience; do not beat so much on thy head. Thy candle shall either to-day or to-morrow give due light; flutter not vainly about like a moth to thine own injury.

Sulaimán.—I shall pierce the heart of heaven with the lancet of my cry. Instead of wearing a crown, I shall hereafter beat on my head. I have so much desire in heart to see 'Alí Akbar's face that I shall fly like a bird to the plain of Karbalá to behold him. Should a youth like 'Alí Akbar become a martyr with daggers, I must no more wish to live, but must throw myself on a sword, so as to put an end to my existence.

The Prime Minister.—Why art thou writhing like 'Alí Akbar's curls, and shedding tears from thine eyes like a rain-cloud? Be not sorry; Akbar shall not receive dagger's wound from any person. Who can be so base and wicked as to draw a weapon against 'Alí Akbar?

Sulaimán.—May I be a sacrifice for Husain and his beloved son-in-law Kásim! I wish I could see just now the dear face of that unhappy creature; I would flutter like a bird about his cypress-like * stature, and wish him continual joy and prosperity. I fear lest that youth's hands be dyed with his own blood, whilst I am not there to help him.

The Prime Minister.—Be not grieved, Kásim is now busy with his wedding nuptials. His mother is now cheering the heart of the bride with loving words. Thou needst not shed tears of blood-red, like the blossom of the pomegranate.

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* See note, p. 10, vol. i.

Sulaimán.—I wish some odour of intelligence would reach me from that rose-garden. I wish some stranger would come from Karbalá. Oh that some messenger would come from Husain as the lapwing * came from the city of Sheba!

The Prime Minister.—Trouble not thyself, there will come a lapwing from Solomon; so thou needst not shed blood-like tears down thy rosy cheeks. Thou shalt either to-day or to-morrow hear a blessed address from Husain. Be not so hasty, thou shalt soon attain thy object.

A Messenger.—I am a messenger from the habitation of the beloved, O ye lovers; I am coming from Canaan, bringing you Joseph's scent. I have come from the city of Sheba, like the famous lapwing which brought a message of peace to Solomon.

The Prime Minister.—Why art thou mourning and sighing, O young man? Tell me, whence comest thou, and whom dost thou seek? Explain unto me thy circumstances, that I may know the reason of thy sighs and cries. Be so good as to inform me of thy secret feelings.

The Messenger.—I who, like a flute, am pouring forth plaintive notes, am a messenger bringing letters from the King of Karbalá. I can tell the story of Akbar, or the tale of Husain the monarch of religion. I have separate accounts of the nightingale and the rose. I am sent to Sulaimán in expectation of assistance, like one turning his face to the niche of prayer in hope of being heard.

The Prime Minister.—Know, O king, that this messenger has come from the street of the beloved; he has arrived from the presence of Husain the chief of the righteous. He is moaning like a nightingale by reason of love for the rose-like face of the Imám of religion. This poor nightingale, O prince, comes from the garden of Karbalá.

Sulaimán.—Come near, O messenger, let me kiss thine

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* See note, p. 143, vol. i.

eyes, for I feel miserably sorry for Husain. I see thou art pouring blood instead of tears from thine eyes. Come, sit down and let me know what is the errand on which thou art sent.

The Messenger.—No wonder, O Amír, if I feel sad; it is not strange if I look restless, like one in trouble. Thou shalt soon know the cause of my distress, when thou shalt have perused the two letters I have brought for thy majesty.

Sulaimán.—It appears from thy words that thou hast brought me no good news. Deliver the letters, and tell me from whom they are, for I do not believe they contain any good intelligence, but only grievous and painful tidings.

The Messenger.—Know thou that this letter is from the King of Karbalá; it is a narrative from the lord of the martyrs, and is composed of doleful expressions. Arise from thy seat, O acceptable and good-intentioned king, in honour to the mandate; and taking it from me, place it respectfully on thy head.*

Sulaimán.—May I be a ransom for thy sorrow-exciting name and letter! may I be an offering for thy musk-sealed writing! Thy epistle is next to the Kur'án in authority and power. O secretary, take the letter of the king of faith, and read it aloud.

The Secretary.—Thus hath our leader written in the letter:—"He who is under the flag of our love must set out for Karbalá, and offer up his life with sincerity and affection a ransom for us. The inhabitants of Kúfah † have killed all my companions, so that no helper is left for me. He who loses his life to-day for my sake, God shall reward him to-morrow with Paradise."

The King.—Oh the greatness of the cruelty and oppres-

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* A mode amongst Orientals of testifying respect to the writer.

† See note, p. 9, vol. i.

sions committed by the son of Ziyád!* He has given all the furniture of the court of Solomon to the wind. O young man, had Husain no 'Alí Akbar? Had he no lion-like youth such as 'Abbás? Was not Kásim aware of Husain's adventures? Why, then, did he not levy an army for him from all quarters?

The Messenger.—O moon, the inhabitants of Kúfah broke their covenant with him; his Akbar's head was cloven asunder with a sword; Kásim was made a martyr through the injustice and malice of the enemy; as for his brother 'Abbás, his hands were cut off from the shoulders. So Husain has none to help him to-day except his poor sister Zainab.

The King.—Woe unto me! my crown and diadem have fallen down from my head; time has sifted black earth on my head at last. Men must weep until the Day of Judgment for this sad event. Well, tell me, O messenger, whose is this second letter?

The Messenger.—This letter, which is a mixture of grief and sorrow, is sent by Zainab, the nightingale of the garden of melancholy and pain. Take it from my hand, O Sulaimán, and read it; see what the miserable Zainab has written.

The Secretary (reading the letter).—Thus hath Zainab written:—"O our friends, why are you regardless of what has happened to us? The party of darkness have put Husain's youths to death; our enemies have killed your friends and lovers. Of all our helpers Husain alone is left; he is the only lamp unquenched in this our family. Should you not come to our assistance, the accursed Shimar† will maliciously cut the head of our beloved Husain, the peace of our soul."

The King.—Alas! the heart of the family of the Prophet is in tortures, while Sulaimán is quietly resting on

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* See note *, p. 177, vol. i.

† See note, p. 43, vol. i.

his throne. Should I remain thus cheerful whilst Husain is in so great trouble? Is such behaviour to be expected from any one who is courageous and manly? Be ye ready to mount your horses, O my retinue, for to-day is the day of zeal and the time for ardour.

The Prime Minister.—We are all ready to obey thy orders, be they what they may; we are willingly following the good pleasure of our judicious benefactor. Let this malignant party cleave our skulls with the sword; we are not, O prince, better than 'Alí Akbar the son of Husain. Let us hasten, and go to the field of battle in Karbalá, peradventure we may save Husain's soul from slaughter.

A Certain Woman of the Tribe.—O women, Zainab is about to become a captive amongst an unbelieving nation, a prisoner to Khaulí and the ill-starred Shimar; shall the daughter of the best among women* be destitute of all help? Alas, alas! arise from your places at once, and gird on your swords. Let us go to-day and either rescue Zainab, or become as miserable and unfortunate as she is.

Another Woman.—Oh! what news is this which has kindled a fire of grief in our hearts? hereafter we must do nothing but mourn and weep. It is unlawful for us henceforth even to live. Come out, all of you, from your houses, for it is time to take a journey. Buckle swords in your belts, and put shrouds on your bodies. Let us start in tears for Karbalá, and carry to that dangerous plain, with lamentation and sorrow, some provisions for Husain's children.

Sulaimán.—Your sincere grief has had much effect upon me, O women; it is not necessary, good ladies, that you should come out to fight for us. Although it is quite plain, ye poor birds, what your good intentions are, still it would be a shame, a great shame indeed, that women should be employed by men to join in war. God willing, we shall soon attain our object, and going to the assistance of Zainab, we shall, by God's aid, save her.

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* See note *, p. 42, vol. i.

One of the Women.—Prayer, O Sulaimán, is Zainab's work day and night. Our chief object is to go and see the poor creature. Though it is considered a shame unto men that women should join in battle, yet these painful news cannot easily be borne by us. We may not fight, but we can carry skins of water on our shoulders for those who are engaged in contest. We can take provisions for the men of war in our bosoms. We shall go, at any rate, with your men to Karbalá, and coo like doves to express our grief.

Another Woman (*following her example*).—Woe be unto us! our holy mistress has lost all patience. She is caught as a prisoner in the hand of the inimical party. Oh! how can it be proper that the daughter of the Prophet should be contemned, debased, and made miserable by the enemies of God? We shall go and become prisoners like Zainab, and then be weary of life like her.

Sulaimán.—O ladies, do not any more add trouble to my cares, nor attempt to put me to shame before the men of my generation. Return ye all to your places and habitations, like broken-winged nightingales to their rose-gardens. Adieu! we wish you good-bye now, we are off to Karbalá; may God be with you!

One of the Women.—May my life be a ransom for thy soul-consuming sighs! God be with thee! O ye young Arabs, hasten to the assistance of Husain, the king of religion, and defend his soul against the cruel designs of the idolatrous nation. O ye young men, Husain, born of the best among women, is helpless; he is ensnared by the accursed wretches, and has no army or troops to deliver him.

The Prime Minister.—O thou worthy of the crown and throne, thou whose diadem shines like that of Jamshíd,*

* Jamshíd, the fourth monarch of the Píshdádian dynasty, was one of the most renowned of the kings of Persia. He was sawn in two with a fish's bone by Zahhák (a prince proverbial for his cruelty), by whom his territory had been invaded and he himself captured.

whose army is as numerous as the stars, according to the outward appearance of the country and the best conjecture I can make, this land to which we have now come is the first territory belonging to the empire of Turkey. Dost thou think it advisable to proceed on, or is thy majesty inclined to alight for some time here?

Sulaimán.—It is better that the victorious army should encamp here for a few days, until we receive some further intelligence from Kúfah how the exalted king Husain is getting on. Let our fortunate troops alight here to see what will be the influence of our star.

A Camel-Driver (*appearing*).—O thou who wast killed at Karbalá, O son of the chosen Messenger of God, thou light of the two eyes, thou beloved of 'Alí the elect, thou offspring of Fátimah the beautiful virgin! * O Husain, thou Imám of the age! Alas for Husain's exile and helplessness! Alas his groans and cries!

Sulaimán.—I see a camel-rider coming from afar, whom I take for a true believer, animated with the spirit with which Moses descended from Mount Sinai. He appears to weep copiously, which shows he knows something about Karbalá; having thus surrendered the ship to the deluge, he must be perfectly aware of what has happened to the pilot.

The Arab.—O my grief for Husain, the oppressed, the murdered exile! O my sorrow for the martyr who was prevented from drinking the water of the Euphrates, the brother of Hasan the elect, the son of Fátimah the beautiful virgin! The fire of my heart a tearful eye can know, the state of my mind a dishevelled lock may understand. A ringing bell alone can comprehend my moans. A naked she-camel may realise the burden of my sorrow.

Sulaimán.—I am sure, O companions, the body of Husain has fallen on the ground; I am certain Husain's

* See note, p. 57, vol. i.

stock is despitefully set on fire. The inward flames of the breast of this man testify that the rose-garden of the Imám is already withered by some wintry blast. Alas! we are all at once disappointed, for Husain's lily-flower is blown away by the wind.

The Arab.—O my sorrow for Husain the martyr, the unique, the wandering exile! Adam is afflicted with sorrow and grief for this lamentable occurrence; the ark of Noah is sunk in the overwhelming deluge of Karbalá. It is not strange that 'Alí should mourn day and night for this sad event; no wonder if Muhammad beats on his sacred breast.

Sulaimán.—Alas! the royal pearl is gone out of our hand, I am sure the matter is already over. This burning sigh which reaches my ears so continually, has made my heart void of all rest, quiet, and patience. Let one of you go quickly and fetch this camel-riding young Arab.

The Prime Minister (*to the Arab*).—Thy cries, O young man, well-nigh make us burst into tears. Thy groans remind us of the sad stories of Karbalá. Come, O young man, to the presence of his majesty King Sulaimán, and ask there what thy heart desireth.

The Arab (*addressing King Sulaimán*).—May fortune, O king, always befriend thee! May the least of thy courtiers be as great as Cæsar! What is thy object in calling me? May the Lord of the whole world prosper thee as long as the world continues to exist!

Sulaimán.—O young man, who approachest us with sighs and tears, say whose messenger art thou, and whence camest thou? O bringer of good tidings, tell us if thou hast any news, ere anxiety and grief shall have undone us.

The Arab.—O king, I have news from the city of Sheba. I have information relating to the occurrences which have taken place in Karbalá. I can talk to you of the sad events in that plain of desolation.

Sulaimán.—Have compassion, O young man, on my blood-stained eyes, and lay thy hand on my heart to

pacify me. I am like Farhád,* so ardent is my wish to see Husain's face. Commence telling me stories about my sweet love.

The Arab.—I shall at once answer thee in a direct manner and reply to every question thou mayest ask me: first, what dost thou mean by this countless army, and where dost thou intend to lead them? Let me know what is thy chief object in collecting these troops and making such a commotion.

Sulaimán.—Hearing that Husain is all alone and destitute of help, his piteous condition prompted me to set out to his assistance with these countless troops which have encamped around me.

The Arab.—O thou who hast come out with a view to help Husain, listen to me and mourn for him, for his house has been cruelly pulled down by the enemy. His green pavilion is blown away by the wind of destruction.

Sulaimán.—Oh, thy words kindle a fire in my bosom! I wish thou hadst become dumb rather than that thou hadst thus spoken! Has somebody told this incident, or hast thou seen the things with thine own eyes?

The Arab.—Dost thou ask me with regard to the circumstances of that sorrowful creature? how can I tell thee all that the tyrannical spheres have unjustly done to him? I myself saw that they immersed him in his own blood.

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* "A youth, named Ferhad, fell so deeply in love with Shírín that Khusru Parvíz declared he would resign her if the lover could cut through an immense rock called *Besitún*, about twenty miles north of Kirmanshán, and bring a stream from one side of the hill to the other.

"When Ferhad was on the point of completing his almost superhuman labour, an old woman was sent to tell him that Shírín was dead; for Khusru Parvíz had become alarmed lest he should complete his work, and claim his reward. The wretched youth, on hearing the destruction of his hopes, clasped his hands above his head, and jumping off the highest part of the rock, was dashed to pieces.

"The remains of Ferhad's labour are still to be seen at the eastern end of the long range of barren mountains that bound the plain of Kirmanshán on the north."—Markham's "History of Persia," p. 88, ed. 1874.

Sulaimán.—Woe unto me! the king of the righteous has been cruelly killed, and this event has rendered our brightest day gloomier than the darkest night. Every beautiful flower which was in the meadow of the age, has been scattered to the winds by one single revolution of the spheres. Alas, a thousand times alas!

The Prime Minister.—Now that we are so unexpectedly and severely brought low, now that Husain is gone from our hand, leaving behind his never-to-be-forgotten sorrow, and now that we are put to shame before the Lord and His creatures, let us, O Amír, try that his family be not carried away. If the face of the world is turned jet-black as the darkest night, that cannot be helped: let us now devise some plan to prevent Zainab's captivity.

Sulaimán.—Tell me, O Arab, what does that black cloud of dust signify, which is rendering my heart and soul extremely sad? Oh! what is the meaning of that mist in this plain of affliction? It makes my heart palpitate.

The Arab.—This which thou see'st with thine eyes is no other than the smoke of the camp of Husain, for they have set on fire* the whole camp of the Imám, the king of men and jinns.† As for his family, they are all led away to Syria as captives, and that in a most insulting manner.

Sulaimán.—O my faithful army, be all of you dressed in winding-sheets, and instantly prepare yourselves to battle with the ill-starred Shimar, until death or victory shall decide the case. We must either deliver the widows from his cruel hands, or we must fight till we make our throats wet with the blood of our wounds. Make haste while we have this opportunity, or we may lose the chance.

* "Shamer—God confound him—called for fire to burn Hosein's tent (having first struck his javelin into it) with all that were in it. The women shrieked and ran out of it. 'How!' said Hosein, 'What! wouldst thou burn my family? God burn thee in hell-fire!'"—Ockley's "History of the Saracens," vol. ii. p. 173, ed. 1757.

† See note, p. 24, vol. i.

SCENE XXVIII.

RELEASE OF FATIMAH, OWING TO THE INTERVENTION OF THE PERSIANS.

WHEN the Prince of Persia, the son of Yazdajird III., heard of the calamity which had befallen the family of Husain, he was much distressed as to the fate of his sister Shahrbánú, the wife of the Imám. Accordingly, setting out with a large army to rescue her in case she should have fallen into the hands of the Syrian army, he accidentally meets her, after she has escaped from the camp at Karbalá. Moved by her entreaties he determines to pursue the enemy, and release at any rate his sister's child. Ibn Sa'd, the commander of the army of Shám, fearing to encounter the numerous hosts of his opponents, consents to set Fátimah the bride free from her chains. "I have a thousand captives; never mind if one of the number be diminished." The remaining unhappy women are left to their fate without so much as an endeavour on the part of the Persian chief to procure possession of them. Well may one miserable and disconsolate prisoner have exclaimed to the departing widow, "When thou arrivest at Ray, O sweet-natured damsel, call to mind the wretched captives thou hast left behind thee."

Málik Kází.—The revolution of the spheres has stripped my gem of its dazzling lustre; heaven has thrown my heart into great perturbation. It being a long time since Husain went to Karbalá, I wonder why no letter has been addressed to me by his blessed pen. I fear lest the king of

Hijáz may not achieve his object in the country of 'Irák. I fear lest the heavens should give the crown of Kai Kubád* to the wind; lest the family of Abú-turáb† be tyrannically brought low. I fear lest the skies, like Afrásiyáb‡ the Turk, should destroy the structure of the kingdom of Persia, and raze it to the ground. Oh that a messenger would come from that quarter! Oh that someone would bring me news from Husain!

The Wazír.—O Prince, thou hast, thank God, the Kayánian crown placed on thy head. Thy diadem is shining brilliantly as the sun, and the Kayánian flag is, besides, hoisted up in thy name; having all these blessings around thee, there is no occasion for thee at all to complain of care and anxiety.

Málik Kází.—O Wazír, although I have on my head a crown set with precious stones, although God has bestowed on me many jewelled ornaments, still I feel very sad, and am much troubled in heart, because I fear lest the Arabs should lead my sister captive another time.

The Wazír.—Thou art so great to-day, that even the blue vault of heaven gives thee tribute; the kingdom of Persia is lifted up by the elevation of thy crown. Set not, therefore, thy heart on such trifles as those just mentioned by thee! I believe thou hast thy temper formed of melancholy itself.

Málik Kází.—Though, O Wazír, I am a king and the absolute monarch of the country of Persia, yet what does this crown or this ring avail me, if my dear nephew, Prince Akbar, fall from the saddle to the ground?

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* Yazdajird III., the father of Husain's wife Shahrbánú, was a descendant of Kai Kubád, the founder of the Kayánian dynasty in Persia.

† See note †, p. 102, vol. i.

‡ Afrásiyáb, a Scythian or Turk by birth, was King of Túrán, and a descendant of Túr; he invaded Persia, and for several years tyrannised over the conquered children of Írán.

The Wazír.—O offspring of Kaikubád, and descendant of Kai Khusrau,* thou art the possessor of the crown and throne of thy royal ancestors; why shouldst thou talk of sad things, and not rather quaff wine from the wonderful cup of Jamshíd?† Do not let sorrow overcome thee, happen what may.

The King.—Known, O Wazír, that if I lose the Kayánian crown and the famous cup of Jamshíd, together with the throne of Kaikubád, it will not grieve me so much as if one from the Arab multitude should chance to untie‡ the veil worn by my sister, the lady of ladies.

The Wazír.—To-day thou art the ruler of all the provinces of Persia; thou wearest the crown, other kings pay thee tribute and homage: thou must rejoice rather than be sorry. Why shouldst thou throw down thyself from such an exalted throne?

The King.—It is true, I am the great ruler of the empire of Persia; I can crown many heads, and deprive others of their kingdoms when I like; yet I would resign my sovereignty and no longer reign, rather than that a camel-driving Arab should make my sister a prisoner.

The Wazír.—O son of Yazdajird, breathe not hot sighs, nor be sorry any more, for I am sure Husain the king of religion is now ruling in 'Irák. Keep thy heart glad concerning thy sister his wife; for she must certainly be now the greatest of all the ladies in his family, and, in fact, his queen. I hope there will come a messenger soon, with some news or letter from thy sister.

The King.—Oh! at what time will there come some news from our Solomon? When will the lapwing§ of the

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* Kai Khusrau was the third monarch of the Kayánian dynasty of Persia.

† See note *, p. 204, vol. i.

‡ See note, p. 121, vol. i.

§ See note, p. 143, vol. i.

city of Sheba arrive? When shall I be enabled to hear news from my dear sister? At what time will a messenger come from Karbalá?

The Messenger.—The days of affliction and perpetual grief have come to an end; here am I a messenger with letters and good news. I am coming from the country of Arabia to Persia, bringing intelligence concerning the reign of Husain the king of religion.

The King.—O friends, there is information for us from the Sultán of Karbalá. Here is a lapwing come from the Solomon of that plain. Welcome, welcome! sing out loudly and pleasantly. I will offer thee my heart and soul as presents. I detect on thee the odour of the King of Bat-há:* the landscapes of Persia have become all verdant through thy blessed arrival.

The Messenger.—First of all, I must place my head at the sole of the foot of the monarch, for everyone must have a respectful regard for the majesty of kings, especially when the sovereign considers himself a slave of the threshold of 'Alí, and when he has the high privilege of being called the friend of Husain.

The King.—Lift up thy head, man, for though I be called a king, yet, amongst those who venerate 'Alí, I am, as it were, a dog of the street; although I be like Kai Khusrau as regards power, still I am but a servant and no more. Tell me, what news hast thou about Husain the king of kings? declare unto us if thou possessest any information with regard to his companions or others.

The Messenger.—Know, O sovereign of Persia, that Moses has ascended to the summit of Mount Sinai, that Antichrist† has died, and that Mahdí, the true prince of

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* See note †, p. 182, vol. i.

† The greater signs of the Judgment Day are "the coming of Anti-Christ, whom the Mohammedans call al Masíh al Dajjál, *i.e.* the false or lying Christ, and simply al Dajjál. He is to be one-eyed, and marked on the forehead with the letters C. F. R., signifying Câfer, or infidel. They

the world, has appeared; that is to say, Mu'áwiyah, the Khalíf of Syria, has departed from this world, and Husain the king of the age has succeeded to his crown and throne. He took a great army with him and went to 'Irák with pomp and glory and much display. This letter, O Amír, is from Husain the king of the world, and this one is from the great lady, thy sister, his queen.

The Prince (*kissing the letter*).—When that royal personage set out for 'Irák, whom took he with him, and how great an army had he? Which of the ladies of the family accompanied him? and which were left behind at Madínah?

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say that the Jews give him the name of Messiah ben David, and pretend he is to come in the last days, and to be lord both of land and sea, and that he will restore the kingdom to them. According to the traditions of Mohammed he is to appear first between Irák and Syria, or, according to others, in the province of Khorasán; they add that he is to ride on an ass; that he will be followed by seventy thousand Jews of Ispahán, and continue on earth forty days, of which one will be equal in length to a year, another to a month, another to a week, and the rest will be common days; that he is to lay waste all places, but will not enter Mecca or Medina, which are to be guarded by angels; and that at length he will be slain by Jesus, who is to encounter him at the gate of Lud. It is said that Mohammed foretold several Anti-Christs to the number of about thirty; but one of greater note than the rest. . . . . The coming of the Mohdi, or director, concerning whom Mohammed prophesied that the world should not have an end till one of his own family should govern the Arabians, whose name should be the same with his own name, and whose father's name should also be the same with his father's name, and who should fill the earth with righteousness. This person the Shiites believe to be now alive and concealed in some secret place till the time of his manifestation, for they suppose him to be no other than the last of the twelve Imáms, named Mohammed Abul Kasem, as their prophet was, and the son of Hassan al Askeri, the eleventh of that succession. He was born at Sermanrai, in the two hundred and fifty-fifth year of the Hejra. From this tradition, it is to be presumed, an opinion pretty current among the Christians took its rise, that the Mohammedans are in expectation of their Prophet's return."—Sale's "Koran," Prel. Dis., sec. iv. pp. 80 and 82, ed. 1734.

The Messenger.—Know, O king, that when Husain started for 'Irák he had about thirty-thousand men with him, over whom, after he had summoned all and was ready to depart, he appointed 'Alí Akbar his son, to be commander-in-chief, consigning, at the same time, the flag and the drum of war to 'Abbás his own brother. He took Kásim, his nephew, also with him, intending to marry him to Fátimah his daughter as soon as he had been settled on the throne of his government in 'Irák. In a word, he was accompanied to Karbalá by all his family except his youngest daughter, who alone, on account of ill-health, was left behind in Madínah.

The King (*opening the letter and reading it*).—Husain the King of Bat-há, has, with his gem-scattering pen, written to me asking me to take with me Persian troops, and set out to assist him whom Gabriel glories to serve. He says I must hasten to his defence, for Yazíd* the cursed wretch is a formidable enemy, and that it is a good opportunity for me to prove my friendship.

The Minister.—Take off the seal of the second letter and read it; let us know what the lady of ladies writes.

The King (*opening the second letter*).—Thus does my sister insert in this letter, saying, "Dear brother, there is a great disturbance around us. Husain is, as it were, in a whirlpool; come to Karbalá and save me, O brother. I fear, God forbid, lest I should be a prisoner again, a captive in the hand of some cruel Arab. God has studded my crown with two precious jewels, one is named 'Alí Akbar and the other 'Alí Asghar."

The Messenger.—O prince, the lady of ladies has delivered to me a verbal message also, which stands thus: "O brother, come, for the wind has swept the way of the desert. Hasten thou, and set out without making any excuse whatever; come to Karbalá for the sake of dear Akbar."

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* See note †, p. 17, vol. i.

The King (*mounting*).—O Persian champions, O Kayánian heroes, all of you gird up your loins; let the Kayánian flag tower forth, let the standard be set on high. Give lusty shouts, O ye warriors, for the blood of Siyáwush* is bubbling. Set out all of you, white and black, that we may be able to give assistance to Husain in time.

Shahrbánú (*riding out from Karbalá*).—O Lord, I have strayed in this wilderness that appears boundless. O my irremediable pain in this desert wherein I wander! I had two precious gems, both of which I lost in Karbalá, and now I am wandering in this plain to find them. The throat of my sucking Asghar† became a mark for an arrow. As long as I am alive, I must not associate with any human being. I am left alone in the desert, there is nobody to assist me in my trouble.

Fátimah, the bride (*in Madínah*).—Didst thou not promise, O 'Alí Akbar, to come back and take me? Dear brother, my eyes are turned white from long expectation for thee. O 'Alí Akbar, be sure that thy grief will soon cause me to die. O my elegant-bodied brother, let me not be afflicted longer by separation from thee.

Shahrbánú (*tying Zú'l janáh to a tree, and sitting there to rest*).—O Lord, the tediousness of the road has made my soul reach the tip of my lips. Where is a resting-place for this sufferer of pain and sorrow, O Lord? The weather is so overpowering, that the heat well-nigh burns up my

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* Siyáwush was a son of Kai Káús. His death is thus given in Firdausí's "Sháh Námah":—"Arrived at his destination, the infamous Girúí Zarah (a Túránian noble), who loved to do nought but ill, cast Siyáwush, as it were a mighty elephant, to the ground, without any feeling of pity for the prince, and without any fear of God before his eyes. He then placed a gold basin before Siyáwush, and stretching his neck thereon like a sheep, severed his head from the body, which was like a silvery cypress; the blood ran into the basin. Then Girúí took the vase to a certain spot and upset it; thereupon a plant sprung up from the blood on the spot where the basin was emptied."—Summarised from Mohl's "Le Livre des Rois," vol. ii. p. 409, ed. 1842.

† See note, p. 174, vol. i.

heart, and I know no other water but the tears that flow down my cheeks. I see the dark aspect of some trees in this desert, let me sit under one of them and be somewhat refreshed and sheltered from the rays of the sun.

Fátimah (*in Madínah*).—Oh! had my brother been to-day with me, I would have been as cheerful as one that wears a head-dress of gold. I would never be heard to groan. Oh, if the shade of an umbrella would but fall on my head!

Shahrbánú.—Alas! poor Fátimah was not in Karbalá to behold the delicate throat of Asghar cut to pieces! Alas! woe be to me! I was not able to carry away with me the pretty cradle of 'Alí Asghar.

Fátimah.—How happy Sukainah must be in beholding now the rosy cheeks of 'Alí Asghar, whose mother must certainly have spread a gold cloth on his cradle in that country!

Shahrbánú.—My son, my son, my youthful son is gone from me! Oh, may never a woman be deprived of her children at any time! The revolutions of the heavens have left two scars on my heart. Only they who have suffered in like manner can know what I feel.

Málik Kází.—The sound of a doleful noise strikes my ear now and then; the sad voice, O friends, well-nigh deprives me of my senses. There is nobody to be seen whithersoever I look. Why is the author of this groan invisible from my view? O ye Persian army, listen all of you, for this sad voice has terribly upset me.

Shahrbánú.—I will no more smell flowers after my pretty blossoms are gone from me. Yea, after the death of 'Alí Akbar my son, I will have nothing to do with roses. Since my dear ones are dead, I will spend all my life in this mountain of Ray.* I will not associate with anyone, nor see a human face.

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* See note †, p. 141.

Málik Kází (*turning his horse aside*).—I hear the voice of one that sings elegies; it resembles the groan of one deprived of her child. Wheresoever I turn, there is a voice heard of weeping, lamentation, and sighing; but it is very strange, the author of the sound is quite invisible.

Shahrbánú.—The death of my faithful companion has made my heart bleed, and caused the leaves of my rose to be scattered on the ground. I am become like a bird stripped of its wings and feathers. I saw the soft body of Husain scorched in the sun. I will therefore leave the shade of the tree, and sit myself in the hot glare.

The King.—There is no God but God! I wonder what this phenomenon means! Is that a spirit that moans, or a fairy who thus laments? The voice is clearly heard, but the owner of it is not to be seen either in the earth or in the air. Bring ye my telescope, perhaps by that instrument I shall be enabled to find out whence this sad voice proceeds.

The Vizier (*bringing the telescope*).—O great prince of the kingdom of Persia, look through the telescope on all sides, and see who is the person that is crying, and whence is this great moaning and lamentation that we hear.

Shahrbánú.—After the death of blooming youths no rose or flower must grow; and if they should spring up, none must be so unfeeling as to smell their scent. After my royal husband's dethronement, and his princes' fall, I must wear always black garments. Oh! the death of Akbar has rendered me quite insensible. Certainly the blood of Siyáwush must begin to boil up. My famous lion-like 'Abbás died after all, and my Isfandiyár* was made blind

* Isfandiyár was the son of Gushtásp, King of Persia. His combat with Rustam, when the latter shot an arrow and blinded the eye of his antagonist, forms the subject of one of the scenes in Firdausí's "Sháh Námah."—See Mohl's "Le Livre des Rois," vol. iv. pp. 561 *et seq.* ed. 1855.

by an arrow. Since my fortune is reversed, I will go all the days of my life from one wilderness to another, from one plain to a similar one.

The King (*looking through the telescope*).—O Wazír, I am looking at that tree yonder. Fix thine eyes, there is some black object sitting down there. It looks like a woman who has scratched her face, and is continually making a noise. Her dress is jet-black like the ringlets of 'Alí Akbar.

The Wazír (*looking in the same direction*).—She is a tall lady, but her stature is somewhat bent, perhaps through adversities. She is a ravisher of hearts, though she seems to have lost her own.

The King.—She mourns like a nightingale. She is a drooping rose; her clothes are all rent. I think some dear one belonging to her must have died.

The Minister.—Her countenance seems familiar to me. In size and stature she resembles the lady of ladies.

The King.—She seems to be in confusion like 'Alí Asghar's dishevelled locks. She looks like a woman who has lost the beloved object of her heart.

The Minister.—I cannot precisely tell who that sweet-natured lady is, but I know I must have often seen her.

The King.—She is groaning sadly, and lays her head upon her knee. Thou mayest be sure she has lost some precious gem. Keep the army here waiting for me, while I turn and ride where the woman is sitting, and see who she can be.

Shahrbánú (*rising from her place in alarm*).—Alas! woe be to me! I am become a prisoner; caught in the snare of affliction. The troops of Karbalá have pursued me even here. I was bereaved of my sons by the cruel son of Sa'd, and being destitute, I took refuge in mountains and plains. I do not know what these troops want with me, or why they do not withdraw their hands from this weak woman.

The King.—My heart is distressed within me by reason

of these sad sighs and groans. This thrilling voice has put me in a great consternation. The mournful strain of this woman has removed rest from my breast. May God make this transaction end in good!

Shahrbánú (*in great agitation*).—There is the warlike army set in array against me. I cannot fight with or oppose them, neither can I run away. O spheres, do not scar my heart again; let not the daughter of Parwíz* be made a captive by the Arabs a second time. O zephyr, turn to Karbalá, for God's sake, and inform dear noble 'Alí Asghar, saying, "Sleep not, for thy mother is made a captive; thou, being the general of the army of Husain, must arise and release her." I spring from the noblest family in Persia; suffer no longer that the honourable of the land should be of no reputation.

The King.—There is no power nor strength but in God! Who art thou, O woman? and why dost thou so mournfully lament? What has thus embittered thy life, and rendered thee so distracted in mind?

Shahrbánú.—Go farther, O young man; for God's sake do not approach me! Let not my day be turned into dark night. Come not nigh, but fear my groans and complaints, for henceforth I detest the society of all human beings.

The King.—Thou art grieving in this valley apart from all; certainly thou art not of the children of Adam, nor canst thou be a human being. Thou must be either an angel, or one of the nymphs of Paradise; but, in either case, I wonder why thou shouldst be thus in trouble.

Shahrbánú (*to Málik Kází*).—Do not approach, for God's sake! but rather move farther off. I am not an angel, nor am I a nymph of Paradise. I am a sorrowful creature bereaved of my sons. I am an exile far removed from my home.

Málik Kází.—Why dost thou not mention thy name, O lady? I am assured now that thou art not a nymph;

See note, p. 138.

but mayest not thou be a fairy? Tell me plainly, O moon-faced * matron, owing to whose death thou art rending thy garments?

Shahrbánú.—Ask me not, O young man, for whom I am complaining. I am not a fairy, but am descended from them. Let me know what dost thou want with the fairies, or why art thou concerned with them? Tell me first, for God's sake, who thou art, and why thou hast come here.

Málik Kází.—Know thou that I am the son of Yazdajird, King of Persia, and am leading his army to Karbalá. I intend to render some service to the Sultán of Karbalá. Husain's wife, Akbar's mother, has written me a letter asking me to set up my canopy as soon as possible at Karbalá; for she says she intends to seat Akbar her son on the connubial throne in that valley.

Shahrbánú.—Alas! the rose has died ere the nightingale has reached the garden. It is time now to wail and rend one's garments. Woe unto me! I have dishevelled my hair, and cut my locks from grief. Woe be to me! that of which I was afraid is come upon me.

The Prince.—Who art thou, O woman dressed in black? and why, as soon as thou heardst my name, didst thou commence thy lamentable cry?

Shahrbánú.—Oh! how is it thou dost not recognise me? May the dust of the world be on my head! O brother, I am Shahrbánú thy sister. Behold her wandering in the desert. My fortune is gone, brother; my luck is reversed.

The Prince.—Why dost thou talk so, O woman? I shall never believe thee to be my sister. Yea, it is impossible thou shouldst be my very sister; I cannot credit this story at all.

Shahrbánú.—If thou canst not, O brother, believe my story, I have with me the musky hair of 'Alí Akbar as a

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* See note, p. 7, vol. i.

token. Here are his curling locks, as well as Kásim's ringlets, and 'Alí Asghar's hair. See also the blood-stained shirt of my beloved husband Husain.

The Prince.—For whose sake, O sister, art thou mourning so sadly? and why art thou wandering distractedly in this wilderness? Where is Husain? and where has the crown of thy head fallen? To whose care, too, hast thou delivered thy daughters and sons? Where is thy Akbar? and what has become of thy prince Asghar? Where are thy bracelets, ankle-rings, and other gold ornaments?

Shahrbánú.—Know thou that heaven has pulled down my house; my Akbar was killed thirsty at the brink of the water; my Asghar sucked milk from the point of the arrow; my daughter was made captive by the son of Sa'd,* and all my royal furniture and chattels were pillaged by the enemy. In short, my royal diadem has fallen, O brother, from my head.

The Prince (beating on his head).—Alas! do you see what heaven has done? how a veil of clouds has dimmed the bright disc of our moon? The spheres have cast me down from a great height. The Kayánian throne is brought very low; the world has lost its real sovereign; the crown has fallen from our heads. O king of high pedigree, why didst thou leave Bat-há for 'Irák and Arabia? Thou shouldst at once have come from Madínah to Persia, O king of religion, and sat here on the throne of Jamshíd† to reign for ever.

Shahrbánú.—Thou wast not there to see how 'Ali Akbar was submerged in waves of blood. Thou wast not present to observe how the palm of my youthful son cast its fruits in the battle-field.

Málik Kází.—I do not wish to retain the kingdom of Ray‡ any more, nor will I have the Kayánian crown henceforth on my head, for the beloved of God is lying down in

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* See note, p. 214, vol. i. † See note, p. 162.
‡ See note †, p. 141.

dust and gore. Alas! how have I come here, wading in waves of blood up to my breast.

Shahrbánú.—Thou wast not there, O beloved brother, to see how 'Abbás of lofty stature died. They thrust the point of the arrow into his eye, in the manner they did in former times to the brave Isfandiyár.

The Prince.—I am much grieved and distressed to hear this story; but what shall I do? A stone is already struck on my glass. Oh that the grave would soon become my throne! for my 'Abbás has been blinded by an arrow. The kingdom of Persia is good for nothing after the eye of Isfandiyár has been deprived of sight with a cruel shaft.

Shahrbánú.—O brother, thou wast not there to behold how they cruelly pierced the throat of little 'Alí Asghar with the point of their arrows. My poor child, owing to the pain he had in his throat, could not suck milk at the breast, but groaned and groaned until he died.

Málik Kází.—What shall I do, O avenging Lord and Judge? my 'Alí Asghar has been innocently killed. Oh! the elegant cypresses* have all been felled! Farídún † has fallen down from his stately throne. Tell me, O sister, how didst thou come here in this valley unnoticed by the ignoble enemy?

Shahrbánú.—Know thou that the Imám of the empire of faith told me that when I should see Zú'l janáh, his horse, come back from the field of battle, I must mount on the saddle, and at once leave Karbalá. He told me I must not stay there, lest I should become a captive amongst the Arabs; nor must I seek enjoyment in this world after his death. So I rode Husain's horse, and nobody saw me up to the time that I met thee.

The Prince.—Where didst thou carry thy lord, O Zú'l

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* See note, p. 10, vol. i.

† Name of a celebrated king of Persia, who reigned about seven hundred and fifty years before the Christian era.

janáh? Why didst thou not bring him back after thou tookest him to the battle-field? The hour when the gold-belted king fell to the ground, when the throne of God tumbled on earth, why didst thou not trample the enemy under foot with thy hoofs? How canst thou bear the reproach of men, and not be ashamed?

The Wazír.—Why art thou crying, O wise king? Why dost thy majesty's face glow red with rage? Why is thy crown, which is ornamented with jewels, full of dust? Why is thy coat, which is studded with precious stones, rent into pieces?

The Prince.—Oh! know that my majestic Kai Khusrau has departed this life. Know that the throne is vacated, and he who sheds light on the throne is gone. Imám Husain the son of 'Alí the chosen is killed, and his companions have all been besmeared with dust and blood. Deplore ye all, and sigh with lamentations for him, putting on black garments at the same time, to show forth your sorrow at his death.

Shahrbánú.—O my brother, go thou forth with all thy troops and regiments, and pursue that cruel party until thou overtake them. Fight with them hard, and snatch from them at least the poor bride, the spouse of Kásim my afflicted daughter.

The Prince.—Ride your horses, O men of valour, and endeavour to fight zealously. Let us intercept Shimar on his way to Syria, and lay an ambuscade for him. Let us raise a disturbance like that of the Day of Resurrection, both with flying arrows and sharp swords.

The Wazír (*to the army*).—Mount your horses, O ye Persian troops, and march forth eagerly to the field of battle. Gird up your loins for war, and hasten to intercept the people of Kúfah on their retreat.

Zainab (*on the back of a camel*).—Days have darkly passed on, and behold! the night is at hand. Zainab, the tree of mourning, the essence of sorrow, is arriving at a village. O women of the country, we are the posterity of

the king of the righteous, and are expatriated from our own land, and made strangers here.

Kulsúm.—O women, Kulsúm is coming as a captive; whoever wishes to hear sighs and cries, let her receive her in her house. O women, they have tied our arms with our hair, and our limbs are galled with cruel cords, O friends.

Zainab.—Heaven has prepared for me distress and woe; is this the entertainment after which my heart sought? Though I have no litter now, still, O camel-driver, drive not the camel so fast; but tell me, what has become of Zainab's litter, and her companions and helpers?

The Spouse of Kásim.—I have lost my beloved husband, be ye witnesses, O friends; I am the spouse of Kásim, sing merrily at the feast. Nay, sing me some mournful dirge, while I sorrow for my husband; for jovial songs and convivial mirth belong to nuptial feasts.

Sukainah.—Every woman in her time leads a more or less happy life; and if she has no father, she may rejoice that she is not without a brother. But if ever a girl were, like me, to be a witness of the death of her brother, you would soon discover what kind of existence she would spend.

A Messenger.—Know, O son of Sa'd, thou commander of the army of infidels, that numerous troops are pursuing after thee from the country of Persia, with the design of delivering the captives from their sad confinement, and taking vengeance in retaliation for the blood of Husain. Let Shimar march about the road and see what passes, and draw up the troops in array for battle.

The Son of Sa'd.—What do I care about the vast number of the enemy's army! Still, you had better carry the captive women to the foot of the mountain. Put the lines in order; and, O Shimar, thou hadst better look about the road. To-day I will eradicate the posterity of the Persians from the earth. I will set fire to the camp of the Kayá-

nians, that the Persians should no longer be insolent to the Arabs.

Shimar (*ascending a height and looking round*).—O general, a great army, as numerous as ants and snakes, is coming towards us, bearing Kayánian standards. Know, that though we are not able to stand before them in war, yet we must try not to display any symptons of alarm in the matter.

Málik Kází (*arriving with drums and flags*).—O men of valour, expert in use of daggers, set your lines in order for battle; ye valiant and brave soldiers, fasten your belts and fight for the honour of the Kayánian crown. To-day I intend to make a great overthrow with the edge of the sword; such that it shall seem as though it were the Day of Resurrection. I am not afraid of the army of the enemy; go on beating drums, O ye warriors.

Ibn Sa'd (*to his army*).—O ye warlike champions and heroes, do not alarm yourselves owing to this confused noise, Persia will not be able to stand against us, for we are like fire, and they as wax. We shall have no cause to regret this battle; let us fight on, and beat the drums with all our might.

Málik Kází.—Come forward, thou cursed son of Sa'd, do not use these vaunting expressions any more. I am of the seed of Bahman,* and a prince of the Kayánian dynasty; come and combat with me, thou empty-pated coxcomb. I am an elephant, or a mighty lion! I am the offspring of King Bahrám Gúr.† Leave thy line and come out for a minute, that I may throw thee headlong on the ground.

Ibn Sa'd.—Thou art proud of thy strength, O young man. Why dost thou vaunt of the great pomp of the Kayánis,

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* Bahman was a son of Isfandiyár, and a celebrated warrior.

† Bahrám Gúr, one of the kings of Persia, was so called from his passion for the chase of the gúr, or wild ass.—See "Johnson's Dictionary," head "Bahrám Gúr."

not knowing that I am one who, when I hoist my flag, cast the crown of Jamshíd to the ground? Thy head is filled with the pride of youth, forgetting how, a little while ago, thy kingdom of Persia was sacked* by the Arabs, who carried off the crown and ring of Persia, leading the women into captivity, and pulling down the diadem from the crown of the head of your Jamshíd.

Málik Kází.—You have severed from the body the head of a youth, the standard of whose father overshadowed the sacred places among you. In so doing, all of you, now, deserve wrath and comdemnation. The time when the Arabs can reproach the Persians has gone away.

Ibn Sa'd.—Know, O young man, that I have no dread of thee at all, yet it is not necessary thou shouldst talk so foolishly or act wantonly. Thou must make no mention of war; declare unto me what is thy real object in this pursuit?

Málik Kází.—Let it be known unto thee that if thou wishest no blood should be shed, thou must deliver to me all the female captives of Husain's family, that we may take the daughters of 'Alí to Persia, and not allow the house of God's Prophet to go to ruin.

Ibn Sa'd.—I shall never release those whom I have kept in the bonds of sorrow; these women are Arab and not Persian captives. I will never give the daughters of the Prince of Arabia to the Persians. If this be thy request, it cannot be granted thee.

Málik Kází.—Thou hast deviated from the right way, O mean son of Sa'd, seeing the wife of Kásim the bridegroom is from our family. She is the daughter of Shahrbánú, whose father was our Parwíz. My sister, the

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* In A.D. 636 the great victory of Kádisíyah was won by the Arabs over the Persian monarch Yazdajird III.—See Price's "Chronological Retrospect of Mahommedan History," vol. i. p. 110, *et seq.* ed. 1811.

lady of ladies, is shedding tears of blood for her dear daughter.

Ibn Sa'd.—Very well, I shall release Fátimah from her bonds for thy sake, to make thee glad and cheerful. O my friends, let Fátimah be set free from her chains. I have a thousand captives, never mind if one of the number be diminished.

Sukainah (to Zainab).—Dear aunt, if they are going to release my sister from her bonds, why does nobody care about me also? He who put the heavy chain on the neck of both of us, why does he not attempt to make us two free at the same time?

Zainab.—Dear Sukainah, I cannot tell why, but I know the noose must remain about thy neck, while Fátimah thy sister is to be set free.

Sukainah.—I see, dear aunt, that I have none to care for me, that my luck is lying hid in the corner of a cage. Surely one who becomes destitute is despicable too, and must bear a perpetual chain of misery round the neck.

Fátimah (to Zainab).—Come, dear aunt, let us sit a while together affectionately, for hereafter we shall not see one another again. After my father met his death, dear aunt, thou hast been much troubled about me. I shall never forget thy kindness so long as I live. If I have used any improper word that has wounded thy feelings, I beg thee to efface the effect from thy heart. Come, let me kiss thy feet, and apologise for all my faults.

Zainab.—No word of thine has left a sad effect on my heart, dear niece; on the contrary, I am ashamed how little I have been able to do for thee. I am sorry, after the death of my brother, I had so few opportunities of performing some service to his poor orphans. I did not wipe off the dust from your moon-like faces, nor had I time to comb your black hair.

The Bride (to Kúlsum).—Come, afflicted Kulsúm, my aunt! Come, thou who hast seen the death of six bro-

thers! Come, let me kiss thy sacred feet; see how very sorry I feel on leaving thee, aunt.

Kulsúm.—Come, let me kiss thy face, my disappointed bride; thou art going to Ray while I am led to Syria. Come, O my delicate blossom, unhappily thou hast withered; thy fortune being reversed, thou hast suddenly become a widow.

Zainab.—O thou sorrowful, newly-married spouse, now that thou goest away, tell thy mother Shahrbánú, in my name, saying, "Sister, before taking up the remains of thy husband, thou wentest away, leaving me in trouble and captivity."

Málik Kází (*to Fátimah*).—Do not fling dust on thy head, O mourning bride, come and ride the horse of thy maternal uncle. Beat no more on thy head, nor sigh so sadly. I will soon take thee to thy mother, the lady of ladies.

Zainab.—O ladies, stop your wailings, and come along with me; bring Husain's daughter on her way; come, all of you.

Fátimah, the bride.—Adieu, I am going from among you.

Zainab.—God be with thee, thou rare pearl.

The Bride.—Adieu, Sukainah; forgive me, sister.

Sukainah.—God be with thee, melancholy sister.

The Bride.—I am going, dear Sukainah, but I have no heart. I am sorry I am obliged to leave thee.

Sukainah.—Thou art going from me, sister, but there is somewhat I must tell thee before thou goest. I do not know whether thou art aware or not. Come, and see how my throat and neck are sore from the rough rope.

Fátimah.—Yes, dear, thou wearest a rope instead of a necklace; I see, dear Sukainah, thy neck is quite sore from the cord. Come, let me kiss the rose of thy face, since I cannot afford to get thee any ointment for thy neck.

The Bride (*riding away*).—Adieu to all of you; I have escaped from among you. Give my compliments to 'Alí Akbar.

Zainab.—When thou arrivest at Ray, O sweet-natured damsel, call to mind the wretched captives thou hast left behind thee.

SCENE XXIX.

DESPATCH OF HUSAIN'S FAMILY AS CAPTIVES TO SYRIA.

AFTER the family of Husain had been conducted to Kúfah by 'Umar Sa'd they were led to the governor, who did not spare their feelings in any way, and "whose brutality to these defenceless captives was further exemplified in the orders which he issued, that the women in a state of entire nakedness should be immediately conducted to Damascus. The head of Hússeyne also, after it had been sufficiently exposed through all the streets of Kufah, was transmitted to the same place in charge of Raujez the son of Keyss, selected for his singular eloquence, to announce to Yezzeid on this occasion the decisive triumph of his cause."—Price's "Chronological Retrospect of Mahommedan History," vol. i. p. 410, ed. 1811.

The Shí'ah traditions abound in the miracles which occurred on the way thither. Amongst other marvels, it is stated, as mentioned in the text, that though the head of the Imám was carried on the top of a spear, yet it refused to move till his daughter Sukainah, who had been removed by Shimar from the rest of the family, was restored to her friends.

'Abdín the son of Husain.*—I am 'Abdín, O God! I have no helper, O my Lord! I am one acquainted with grief. Oh! why is this cruelty done to us?

Zainab.—I am the helpless Zainab, wandering from home, having no remedy for my pains; oh, spare us this cruelty!

Sukainah.—We sorrowful children have become desti-

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* See note †, p. 96, vol. i.

tute of all help, now that the good Husain is gone. Oh, we are undone!

'Abdín.—These accursed ones who lead us thus into this wilderness, resemble those who carry the water of life to the regions of darkness. They are taking me to Syria as a prisoner. My body is feverish, my constitution delicate, and my condition altogether wretched.

Sukainah.—Sukainah, O father, is subject to an incurable disease; she is consumed with lamentation and moaning. Now that thou art gone, what can a fatherless child like me do, who, since the death of Akbar and Asghar, has had to submit to an irreligious fellow such as Shimar, the treacherous wretch?

Kulsúm.—Where is poor 'Abbás, that he may relieve us destitute women—that he may in this calamity attend on us helpless creatures? Oh! Shimar's cruelty has not let any companion remain for us to behold.

Sukainah.—O father, behold Sukainah in the hand of the people of Kúfah;* have a regard for this sore-hearted, ailing orphan of thine! O my father, pity me, and, by way of assistance, look upon this houseless miserable wanderer.

Zainab.—O Husain, they are carrying Zainab thy sister naked on a she-camel; the are bearing us, the women, by way of the wilderness! O zephyr, say to the people of Sheba, they are carrying me like Bilkís,† away from Solomon.

'Umar bin Sa'd.‡—O ye commander of this army, I say to you, especially to thee, O irreligious Khaulí, and to thee, O black-hearted Shimar, my advice is that we must endeavour to reach the yellow hill (Sanjár),§ that we may

* See note, p. 9, vol. i. † See note *, p. 2.

‡ See note, p. 214, vol. i.

§ There is a well-known town of Sanjár near Músul, and also a district of the same name. In this latter there is a village called "Tall 'Afar," or the "dust-coloured hill." Not impossibly this is the "yellow hill" of the text.

put up there for the night, and rest from the fatigue of our journey. At the dawn of the day we shall start for Syria.

Shimar (addressing the army).—Listen unto me, O ye defenders of the cause of Yazíd,* thus has Ibn Sa'd commanded. You must carry 'Alí's family, no matter how great the trouble and pain, to the yellow hill (Sanjár), that being the station for the night.

Khaulí.—I wonder where is the commander of this army? Where is he who is ruined in both worlds, the ill-starred Shimar? Where can I find him, O my friends? where is that enemy of God and adversary of the Prophet?

Shimar.—O companions, I see a horseman coming; the poor young man is everywhere searching for Shimar. What can be his object, or why should he want me? I must ask him, that I may be acquainted with the matter.

Khaulí.—Know, O Shimar, thou armour-clad warrior, that a countless army, all Shí'ahs and friends of 'Alí, is laying in wait for thee to intercept thee on the way and take these desolate women from thee.

Shimar.—I am speaking to thee, O chief of this perfidious army, thou commander of our troops, the intrepid Ibn Sa'd. Be it known unto thee, O general, that a band of Arabs is pursuing after us, with haste indescribable, in order to overtake us, and, if possible, rescue from our hands the prisoners belonging to the family of T. H.† Muhammad the Prophet.

Ibn Sa'd.—Carry thou the family of 'Alí, with great contumely and hatred, by that trackless road which is full of thorns and briars; there is a bye-way there filled with sharp prickles, the piercing points of which will turn the day of the captives into dark night. Thou must endea-

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* See note †, p. 17, vol. i.

† See note, p. 85, vol. i.

vour to prevent them from moaning aloud; yea, even the fatherless band and the mournful women must be prohibited from lamenting.

Shimar.—I shall carry away these miserable prisoners and lead them by a trackless road in this wilderness. I shall drag 'Abdín over thorny paths, that the poor delicate youth's feet may be hurt with the scratches and wounds thereof.

Sukainah.—The caravan, O aunt, having set its face to the city of Canaan, I wonder why my Joseph hangs down his head on his bosom. My aunt, I want Husain! I want Husain! tell me, I pray thee, where is he? I am become blind in my two eyes, tell me where is the light of the world gone? Thou, O thousand-noted nightingale, didst bring Husain to Karbalá. Thou must tell me now where thou hast sent him.

Zainab.—O Sukainah, thou distressed and wretched orphan, that, owing to the oppression of the malignant party, ridest on a naked camel, should we return alive once more to Karbalá, I will put thy father's hand in thine, poor sorrowful niece.

Sukainah.—Flowers and thorns are alike to me, aunt, so long as I want my pretty rose. My heart is gone from me; where is the restorer of it, aunt? I was always in the bosom of my father tenderly caressed; my day is now turned into night by his absence. Oh! tell me, where is the candle of my banquet gone?

Zainab.—O rose of the garden of Husain, make me not unhappy; dear thing, hurt me not grievously in this thorny place. Thy pain cannot be remedied in this wilderness, dear niece, the cure for disease is in Karbalá; thou needst not mourn here, poor thing.

Sukainah.—Why, then, didst thou not leave me in Karbalá, O aunt? Notwithstanding all my pain, it is strange why thou hast not let me remain where I could find medicine. Why hast thou removed me from my father? Why am I taken away from Karbalá?

Zainab.—When did I separate thee from the society of thy friends, dear niece? I have not brought thee to this wilderness, my love. What time did I cause thee to leave the lap of thy father? I do not remember to have removed thee from thy dear relations.

Sukainah.—Who, then, has brought us to this state of desolation, with so much ignominy? who has removed me from the presence of my dear father? What fowler has snatched me away from my rose and garden? what enemy has rendered us so miserable in this thorny wilderness?

Zainab.—Ask me not this question any more, my lovely niece; ask it of Khaulí and the ill-starred Shimar. Be quiet, O my melodious nightingale, for a while; have pity on thyself and on my weeping eyes.

Shimar.—Make no noise, O Zainab, for if thou utterest the least sound, I shall surely cut thy head off with this sharp dagger, as in the case of thy son. By the order of the accursed, reckless son of Sa'd, I will turn thy back black with this whip. (*Beats Zainab.*)

Zainab.—May the Lord ruin thy house for this thy injustice! whip me not so severely and cruelly. I shall remain quiet, though I have a thousand things to say. I shall keep silence, and will never groan again.

Shimar.—I am a guard over thee in the midst of this caravan, and will not let thee cry aloud, or make the least noise. Thou knowest very well what a fury I am; I shall surely strike your souls with the lightning of my temper.

Sukainah.—Woe unto me for the many thorns that have pricked my feet! Behold! they are bleeding from every vein. The hand of my power has become motionless, and the fetters gall my delicate legs.

Shimar.—O sweet rose of Husain's meadow, thou poor orphan, put an end to thy lamentation and weeping, for should my ears catch the voice of thy mourning, I shall surely cut off thy head with this my glittering sword. Nay,

I will root out thy tongue in a most cruel manner if I hear thee lamenting and pouring forth thy notes like a nightingale.

Sukainah.—Help me, aunt! I am greatly afraid of this treacherous infidel. I am, O aunt, in dread of this wicked chief. This tyrant will kill me at length; pity thou my condition, and kindly remedy my inward vexations and pain.

Zainab.—Have regard for the burning sighs of the child, O tyrant! have compassion, and grant the heart-wished request of this poor creature. She is a little girl without any friend or supporter in her adversity; smite no more on her dear face with such cruel slaps.

Shimar.—O Zainab, complain not of the child's hard treatment, for the molestation of the little girl is of good omen to me. I will continually trouble this distressed child, ever making her pains more grievous than before.

Sukainah.—I beseech thee, O tyrannical Shimar, not to hurt this poor maid so much. Ill-use us not, lest thine own dear ones be in return similarly treated by some malicious party.

Shimar.—Thy lamentation and weeping are of no avail to thee, child. What dost thou gain by this thy noise and uproar? Cease to weep for the absence of thy father and companions, otherwise I will cut thy head off in an ignominious manner.

Sukainah.—Dear father Husain, where art thou? Dost thou not behold me in this misery? O the cruelty of Shimar, beloved father! O the hardships and anguish of us poor orphans!

Shimar.—Talk not, O dishevelled-haired girl; complain not to thy father of my cruelty, or I will make thy body blue with this whip.

Sukainah.—Cease for a moment this injustice of thine, O tyrant; endeavour to make the heart of these unfortunate wretches rejoice for a while. Grant this sad-hearted,

fatherless child permission to weep over her misery; let this wing-tied bird be set at liberty from the cage of wretchedness.

Shimar.—Whence hast thou got so many tricks, O Sukainah? What enmity is this thou bearest to thine own soul? A thousand times I have told thee, O orphan prisoner, not to groan for the absence of thy father, or lament that he is gone. I will now sever at once this head of thine from thy body in a most cruel manner, for there is a proverb that "a severed head has no voice."

Sukainah.—If thou hast in view to murder me, I pray thee give up the intention, thou impudent fellow. What wrong have I committed besides mourning for my father? What else can I do if I rend not my garments?

Shimar.—Dost thou again make a noise, thou miserable wretch? I must now make thee taste some new pains, and acquaint thee with fresh sorrows. I shall break thy head with this stick in a shameful manner, and cause thee to forget thy weeping and lamentation.

Sukainah.—Hurt me not, thou merciless fellow, for I will no more speak. Put me not in chains of cruelty by reason of my fault in speaking. See how the thorns have piteously wounded my feet in this wilderness! let this ignominy and shame, O tyrant, suffice thee.

Shimar.—Come, it is time to bring a sudden autumn upon thy spring. Come, for death is the most suitable thing for thee. Thou being like Joseph, I will, as it were a wolf, tear thee to pieces; come near, I know where I must carry thee.

Sukainah.—How happy is the girl who always beholds the face of her father, who lays her head, now on his shoulder, now on his bosom! Since thou intendest, O Shimar, to kill me, pray do it here, that Zainab my aunt may be able to have my body buried.

Shimar.—I do not intend to kill thee, but to carry thee to a far place that Zainab may not be able to see a trace

of thee, or even hear of thy name. I shall take thee by this trackless path into the wilderness, and cast thee somewhere whence thou canst not find thy way to Zainab at all.

Zainab.—My Sukainah has ceased her groans, and become silent. I am sure she has fainted, wherever she is. O Sukainah, thou nightingale of my soul, why art thou silent? Where hast thou fallen? Art thou in a swoon, my love?

Khaulí (*bearing Husain's head upon a spear*).—O Shimar, behold how the head of this great personage is fixed in its place like the point of a compass! I cannot understand this strange occurrence at all, for in whatsoever direction I pull the head, it is motionless.

Shimar (*moving the spear*).—My dear friends, I cannot tell you what this head has in view; I only know some wonderful mystery is comprised therein. For behold! it casts a glance, now in one direction, now in another. O son of Sa'd, it is a puzzling thing, a most strange phenomenon, which I observe; for why should this blood-stained dissevered head refuse to go with us?

Ibn Sa'd.—Thy nonsensical speech cannot in any way enter into my understanding, O Shimar. The head, being fixed on the top of a spear, nothing in the world can prevent it from being carried along with the army whithersoever they should wish to turn it. Again, why should it disregard the family whose head it has once been? Give me the spear, thou chief of the tyrannical army, that the mystery of this blood-stained head may be known unto me. (*The head does not move when shaken.*) There is no strength and power but in God! My heart is overwhelmed with horror at this incident. I am amazed at the doings of this dissevered head. What a miraculous thing is manifested in this land by the head of the Sultán of Madínah, the King of Karbalá! No one upon the earth being able to solve this enigma, I must have recourse to the uplifted head itself for the solution. (*Turns to the head of Husain.*)

O flower of the lap of Zahrah,* thou illustrious chief, the guide of all God's creatures, I beseech thee not to suffer that Yazíd should come to know this occurrence. As thou art a mine of generosity, I pray thee untie this knot in my heart.

Husain's Head.—O sister Zainab, Sukainah has been stricken in this wilderness; my girl has fallen among thorns, and is in distress. Shimar having cast her in a dreary place, my pleasant-noted nightingale is in this way shut out of the garden. I will not remove from this spot until my dear child comes; for why should that fatherless orphan remain in such a wilderness?

Zainab.—May I be a ransom for thy oppressed and sorrowful child! I know nothing as to how Sukainah was led away into the wilderness. I beg thy pardon, dear brother; forgive Zainab her fault, for I am quite unacquainted with what has befallen that unfortunate child. Mourn on, ye women, the whole of you, and rend your garments. Alight all, and cast dust on your heads. Inquire after Husain's poor daughter, whose absence has thus made his heart restless.

Kulsúm.—As my Sukainah is neither heaving sighs nor yet moaning in sorrow for her father, if she is not dead, the poor thing must be asleep. O spheres, why should this immense cruelty be done to us? May God bring it to pass that Husain's orphan is merely asleep.

'Abid-dín.—Sukainah, my unhappy sister, where art thou? and why, poor exile, art thou, without cause, separated from us? What has made thee silent, so that thou dost neither sigh, moan, nor cry? O light of my eyes, I wish I knew where thou hast fallen, and art to be found.

Zainab.—O companions, what has become of my Husain's dear girl, for whose absence I am thus lamenting? Set thy

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* See note, p. 22, vol. i.

face, O Kulsúm, towards the wilderness, peradventure thou wilt be able to find that weeping damsel.

Kulsúm.—O Lord, I do not see that matchless girl. I wonder where my child Sukainah has gone!

Zainab.—O 'Abid, thou must take the other direction, and seek out Husain's child. As for myself, I will follow this road, and inquire after that helpless creature.

'Abid.—O Lord, cause that weeping child to be found by me in this desert. O gracious Being, enable me to see her.

Zainab.—Sukainah, dear niece, where canst thou be? Why, my darling, art thou far from Zainab?

Sukainah.—Being separated from my beloved companions, I am wandering in this wilderness.

Zainab.—Alas for Zainab's fortune, alas! my day is converted into dark night.

Kulsúm.—O sister, much as I looked in this wilderness, I could find no trace of that weeping girl.

Zainab.—O 'Abid, tell this sorrowful woman if thou hast any news about Sukainah.

'Abid.—Nay, aunt; much as with this feverish body I searched for that poor girl, I, too, was not fortunate enough to see her.

Zainab.—Oh try, try! make haste to every quarter, peradventure you will find that fatherless child.

Kulsúm.—I am sore vexed in this wilderness, I fear I shall die without the chance of seeing her, poor thing!

Zainab.—Woe unto me! methinks Sukainah has died in this desolate abode through the cruelty of the malicious enemy.

Sukainah.—Woe unto me! I shall die through vexation and anguish of heart. I fear I shall be at last devoured by ravenous beasts.

Zainab.—Sukainah, dear niece, let us not be disturbed any longer owing to thee.

Sukainah.—Where is the poor sad Zainab? will she not take notice of my miserable condition?

Zainab.—Come, O women, even all of you, for it is time to make a noise: Sukainah the dear Egyptian captive is found out. Sukainah is lying down, hushed altogether into silence. O the cruel brambles that have pricked her feet! Carry my poor child now on your shoulders; I will most tenderly take out the thorns from her lovely feet.

Sukainah.—Dear aunt, I desire nothing from the Lord but death, now that my father's head is seen on the top of a spear. It is the arrow of my father's absence that has pierced my heart. As for the thorns that have pricked my feet, I do not feel their smart at all.

Zainab.—The thorns that have hurt the soles of thy feet seem to pierce my eyes when I behold thee, O niece. Arise from thy place now, O flower of Husain's lap, for I desire nothing but thy society in this frightful condition of mine.

Sukainah.—Please tell me, dear aunt, even me the destitute little orphan, whither do these unbelievers intend, by way of injury and hurt, to carry us poor prisoners?

Zainab.—May I be a sacrifice for thee, poor sorrowful Sukainah! Alas! what shall I say to thee, O destitute little orphan? They will carry us, the oppressed ones by the cruelty of the foul son of Ziyád* and the wicked Shimar, into the capital of Yazíd's kingdom, the base wretch!

Sukainah.—Tell me, dear aunt, how long will these heads remain on the tops of the spears of the cruel people of Kúfah? † How long must I behold the dear head of my father shining at the end of a spear, like the sun? Tell me how long the head of God's elect must thus suffer contempt.

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* See note *, p. 177, vol. i.; note, p. 43, vol. i.; and note †, p. 17, vol. i.

† See note, p. 9, vol. i.

Zainab.—Know thou that the bleeding head of the martyr-king, Husain, for whose sorrow the sun has uncovered its face, is about to be carried by the base wretch Ibn Sa'd to the accursed Yazíd in Syria.

Sukainah.—Come, O goodly faced aunt, and let us go to that tyrannical infidel, and entreat that black-faced, faithless person to take down the head of my father from the spear, and deliver it for a minute to me, that I may wipe the dust off his sacred face affectionately, and wash off the dust of his locks with the water of my eyes.

Zainab.—Our poor little orphan, let us go to this merciless dog, even the wicked Ibn Sa'd. Let us both ask him entreatingly, peradventure that evil-doer will pity us and comply with our request. (*Addressing 'Umar Ibn Sa'd.*) Come, O thou apostate unbeliever, have mercy on this sore-hearted, poor child, and order the wicked Shimar to let the head of the Imám of the age be taken down for a minute, that Sukainah, his weeping girl, may, with sighs and cries, wipe off the dust from his sacred face.

Ibn Sa'd.—Know, O thou sister of Husain the martyr, that thou shalt not see his head in thy lap any more. In this very way thou see'st, with this very contempt and shame, even with the dust and blood sticking to it, thy brother's head must be brought to the foot of the throne of Yazíd. Therefore, O sister of Husain the martyr, be no more importunate.

Zainab.—Have some regard for the sighing of this young orphan, O thou whose tyranny has been levelled against all the members of this sacred family. What harm will it do thee, thou accursed wretch, if, to soothe this miserable orphan, thou, even thou, the malicious son of Sa'd, permittest the girl to wipe off the dust from her father's face?

Sukainah.—Come, O irreligious tyrant, pity this destitute, sorrowful orphan. I, the oppressed, have a desire in my heart to put my cheek on my father's cheek, and to

wash my dear Husain's head tenderly with the water of my eyes and the blood of my heart.

Ibn Sa'd.—Know assuredly, O desperate girl, that this is a matter to be accomplished only in thy dreams. Thou shalt no more put thy lips on thy father's cheeks, neither shalt thou wipe the dust off thy father's handsome face.

Shimar.—The heart-touching speech of thee, O poor, fatherless girl, has, by our Lord, burned my merciless heart. Take from me now this head of thy father, for whose sake thou seemest to have been drowned in the blood of distress.

Sukainah (to the head).—Dear father Husain, peace be unto thee! thou light of my two eyes, peace be on thee! Thy body lies at Karbalá, under the earth, while thy head is here with me the afflicted. Oh, how great is thy affection towards me thy child! What sympathy is this, O dear father?

Zainab (to the head).—On thee be peace, O my dear Husain! Peace be on thee, thou light of my two eyes! O the cruelty of Shimar the accursed one! O the tyranny of that malicious infidel! The evil he has done thy family is beyond the pale of belief.

Sukainah.—Arise from thy place, O my aunt; behold! my father has come back from his journey. Fetch me some rose-water and a comb, that, with a sorrowful heart, I may wash off the dust from his face, and smoothe his hair. If thou hast no rose-water, poor aunt, I shall, instead thereof, sprinkle him with my tears.

Zainab.—Mourn not so much for thy father, my niece Sukainah; let not my heart be inflamed with thy fire-scattering sobs. For my sake, be thou somewhat patient, for thy lamentation will turn the world upside down.

Ibn Sa'd.—O Shimar, thou apostate unbeliever, take that blood-stained head from the hand of this girl, for she is creating a disturbance among beasts, birds, and angels. She is making heaven and earth groan by her mourning and sighing.

Shimar.—Give thy father's head to me, poor Sukainah; groan not so much, thou miserable girl. The hearts of all God's creatures are consumed through thy crying; all jinns * and angels are weeping on thy account, O Sukainah.

* See note, p. 24, vol. i.

SCENE XXX.

ARRIVAL OF HUSAIN'S FAMILY AT DAMASCUS.

On the arrival at Damascus of the family of Husain, accompanied by the mutilated head of their martyred lord, the cruel and blood-thirsty Yazíd "could not be withheld from bestowing, like his representative at Kúfah, on the head of his unfortunate rival the same brutal indignity, by beating it on the lips and teeth with his whip. . . . Turning to the younger Ally, who was present with the other captives, he proceeded in a train of insult to reproach him with the judgments which seemed to pursue the destinies of his family, and receiving from him a reply equally modest and applicable . . . he continued to rail at his unhappy prisoner, until after sufficiently indulging his malevolent spirit, he turned to exhaust his spleen upon the noble-minded Zeynab, whose sorrows he might propose to aggravate when, in addressing her by the appellation of daughter of the Prophet's son-in-law, he brought to her recollection the exalted stock from which she sprung."—Price's "Chronological Retrospect of Mahommedan History," vol. i. p. 410, ed. 1811.

*Shimar** (*to Yazíd*).—Good tidings, O king, I have brought thee the descendants of 'Alí, bound in chains, let it please thy majesty to order them to be introduced to thy presence. They are fastened with chains, and I shall

* See note, p. 43, vol. i., and note †, p. 17, vol. i.

presently bring them here as slaves for thy majesty. Tell me in what way I must lead the family of the thirsty-lipped* king into thy presence after they have entered Damascus. Must I with honour place them behind the curtain of respect, or must I pass them through every bázár and street, to their shame and disgrace?

Yazíd.—Well done, O Shimar, this is fidelity indeed! Such is true loyalty and service done to the household of Sufiyán.† No subjects have ever thus loyally served their king; people may have performed good service to their sovereign for the sake of money or worldly honours, but none has ever acted in a true and upright way like thyself. Since thou art the most esteemed at my court, I invest thee, on that account, with this robe of honour, which I bestow on thee. We will also honour thee by asking thee to sit down with us and drink a few glasses of tulip-coloured wine in our company.

Shimar (*having drank a few cups*).—After all the ill-usage, hatred, and contempt which these prisoners will have to undergo in passing the bázárs and streets, let thy majesty tell me where these afflicted creatures ought to be lodged.

Yazíd.—Go, and make them pass like other captives, bare-headed in the streets and bázárs at Damascus. This being done, lead the holy family of 'Alí to a ruinous place behind the kitchen attached to our palace.

Shimar (*to the Keepers of the Captives*).—Thus, O miserable wretched creatures, has Yazíd ordered, "Let the family of Husain enter the city of Damascus."

The Holy Family (*entering the city*).—Poor unfortunate Zainab, captivity on one hand and exile on the other.

Zainab (*alone*).—On one hand they throw stones at my head, and on the other hand I see Husain's beard dyed with his blood.

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* See note, p. 14, vol. i.

† Abú Sufiyán was the grandfather of Yazíd, at whose instigation Shimar murdered Husain and his family at Karbalá. See also note ‡, p. 208, vol. i.

The Holy Family.—Poor unfortunate Zainab, captivity on one hand, and exile on the other.

Zainab.—O thou whose head is lifted on a spear before my eyes, see, my hair is full of dust, my brother.

Imám 'Abid-dín.—O father, father, thou who wast sacrificed and stript of thy clothes, thou dost not know how I am troubled at the loss of thee. I am caught in the hand of a tyrannical nation. I, being unwell, am brought as a captive to the capital of Syria; who will nurse me at Damascus, dear father? If I die while I am under chains and bonds, who, O father, will bury this feverish body of mine in the grave?

Sukainah.—O my father, thou chief of the mournful troops, thou commander without an army or standard-bearer, how can it be proper that I, who was brought up tenderly in thy lap, should be led bare-headed by the enemy through the bázárs?

Fátimah.—O father, thou who wast cruelly made a faithful martyr, behold me a captive in the hands of an unbelieving nation's army. I, the gem that had an appreciative possessor, such as thyself, have none in all the bázárs of Damascus to care for me. Behold, father, how the women of the city on the house-tops and the walls speak reproachfully concerning us.

Kulsúm (to 'Abbás' head).—O brother, thou beloved of the sister, thou standard-bearer of a king without an army or troops, my pained heart is bleeding for thee, still thou dost not ask me how I feel. Thou dost not inquire why my stature is bent, why the colour of my face has faded away? The death of our youths has rendered me old. Yokes and chains have bent my frame. I am in vain beating on my breast, the cry of dear Sukainah well-nigh kills me.

Sukainah (to Husain's head).—Behold my tearful eyes, O father, and answer me the question I put to thee. Is it good that I should come after thee in a broken litter, stage after stage, and thou shouldest not inquire after my con-

dition, nor care about my pains and aches? Is this the way parents treat their beloved children? What religion is this, dear father? What faith is this, that I should be riding on a naked camel while a multitude of strangers* are staring at me?

Zainab.—O Sukainah, thou desolate orphan, I pray thee to cry more gently, for if thou heavest sighs from grief, thy father will be put to shame, dear niece.

Shimar.—The wicked Yazíd has ordered you to put up in this ruinous place, which is without roof and door.

Imám 'Abid-dín.—Since, O aunt, we are strangers in this ruinous place, and are destitute and houseless in this city of Damascus, I beg thee to chant us such a dirge in tones of exile that even the nightingales will be tempted to sing around thee and join in the harmony.

Zainab.—O impudent people of Damascus, ye cruel apathetical men, turn aside for a moment, that, lamenting and weeping, we may seek a private place and form ourselves into a mourning circle.

Shimar.—Know, O Yazíd, that there has arrived an ambassador from Europe, in great pomp and glory, at the capital of thy empire.

Yazíd.—Order the people of Damascus all to hasten to meet the ambassador in question.

The Ambassador (entering).—What embers are seen in my breast again? What fire is visible in my heart? By this playful Damascus, by this false moon, by this flaming sphere, by this distressing earth, I am perplexed, I am afflicted; my mind is made very dull by these four mothers, the elements, and by these seven fathers, the heavens. By the dagger of grief Saturn's back is bent, by the sword of sorrow Gemini's pate is cloven in two. By this sad Damascus, by this sweet palace of Shírín,† has the voice

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* See note, p. 121, vol. i.

† The Palace of Shírín is situated near Hamadán, and takes its name from a slave of Khusrau Parwíz, King of Persia, by which monarch it was

of mirth reached the region of the Pleiades. Curling hair, ornamented legs, painted eyes! O the damsels of Syria! I had heard of Damascus that, from the very dust thereof, one can smell the perfume of delight. But alas, alas! woe be to me! how have the poor things come to be bound up with chains and fetters! This lady deserves a place in Paradise; as regards the other, Eve should be but a handmaid in her apartment. With respect to these two pretty girls, whose rosy cheeks have turned pale and dark from the scorching rays of an eastern sun, I wonder why the

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built. "King Parwíz, whose residence was at Kirmánsháhán, ordered that a park should be constructed for him, four farsangs (fourteen miles) square, in order that it might be filled with every sort of game, which would breed and multiply therein. He charged a thousand workmen with the task, and assigned to each of them as daily rations five loaves of bread, two *rothls* of meat, and a flask of wine. They devoted seven years in completing the park and assembling therein the various sorts of animals demanded by the king. When all was finished they sought out *Pahlid* the singer, and begged him to inform the king that his royal orders had been executed. Pahlid composed for the occasion a song which he chanted before Parwíz, and in which he celebrated the 'Garden of the Chase.' The king, transported with joy, gave him a robe of honour, and magnificently recompensed the workmen. One day, after he had imbibed somewhat freely, his majesty bid Shírín express a wish, and promised to comply therewith; the latter thereupon bade the monarch cause two rivers to spring from rocks and pass through the garden, and also requested him to construct for her in the midst of the park a castle which should surpass in splendour all the palaces of the royal domains. The king, whom wine had deprived of reason, agreed; but when his intoxication had passed away he forgot the promise which he had made. Shírín, not daring to recall it to his mind, offered to give the singer Pahlid her private possessions at Ispahán if he would compose a song in which he would awaken the memory of the monarch. The musician consented, and his stratagem was completely successful. The king thanked him for having recalled the promise previously made, and at once gave orders for the construction of a palace such as his mistress desired. As to Shírín, she fulfilled her agreement as regarded Pahlid, who therefore betook himself, together with his family, to Ispahán."—Translated from De Meynard's "Dictionnaire &c. de la Perse," p. 448, ed. 1861.

enemy have tied their locks together in such an unkind manner.

Sukainah.—Where art thou, O king of Madínah, dost thou not see how the foreigners come and look at thy daughter Sukainah?

The Ambassador.—Woe unto that unjust and cruel executioner who brought to the earth such honourable chiefs. Heaven has levelled to the ground so many pretty sugar-canes and elegant date-trees. This young head which, on the top of the spear, seems to be successively drinking the health of these two maids, and smacking his ruby-like lips, must, no doubt, be a brother to these two girls, the poor delicate creatures. From the moving glance of this other head, I am quite sure that he is in love with this moon-faced* damsel. This must be a bride and that a bridegroom. As for this luminous head which, from one end to the other, appears like a full moon in the highest horizon, it seems to be ashamed before these children; because, methinks, he has not been able to get them some water to drink. This brilliant star, with fading body, that smiles with affection, before whose hair and face the sun and moon are but dim and pale, seems to be that monarch in whose glorious court kings appear as beggars; even this holy personage the flame of the burning bush has made fall in a swoon in the valley of Sinai,† like Moses. This little head which, through the oppression of the unbelievers, is deprived of the breasts of its mother for ever, is evidently the child of that other head, for there are many tokens of resemblance between the two. O holy and living God, thou

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* See note, p. 7, vol. i.

† "Remember when Moses said unto his family, 'Verily I perceive fire; I will bring you tidings thereof, or I will bring you a lighted brand, that ye may be warmed. And when he was come near unto it, a voice cried unto him, saying, 'Blessed be he who is in the fire, and whoever is about it: O praise be unto God, the Lord of all creatures! O Moses, verily I am God, &c. &c.'"—Sale's "Koran," chap. xxvii. p. 309, Ed. 1734.

sole Creator of all things, do thou reveal the secret to me!

Yazíd.—Welcome, O ambassador of the kingdom of Europe, thy various presents are all accepted by us. Come and sit down on our throne studded with precious stones, and see the whole glory, dignity, and magnificence of my majesty.

Zainab.—Give ear, O heaven, to the vexations of Zainab! everything seemingly easy has become a difficulty for this distressed creature. O heaven, thou hast for a long time pursued us day and night, and now at length thou makest Zainab dwell in a ruinous place. O heaven, thou hast pulled her chains from Madínah to Makkah, and thence to Kúfah, Egypt, and Aleppo. Why dost thou approve, O heaven, that Christians and infidels should have the audacity to sit on a throne in front of Zainab?

Yazíd.—Let one of the slaves or door-keepers go to that ruinous place where the family of the Prophet lodge, and say that I wish all the heads brought here; then I will seat the fatherless ones before me on one side, that I may observe them.

Shimar.—I say unto you, O sore-hearted family, the ill-starred Yazíd has summoned you to his presence.

Zainab.—What has Zainab to do in the court of Yazíd? how shall this unhappy wretched woman behave with that man of cruelty? Is Zainab to be brought before strangers? behold the enormous iniquity, O God! For what reason shall the sun enter the sign Scorpio?

Yazíd.—Let one of the more trustworthy of my court, one of those who can confidentially be sent to my seraglio, go and bring my daughter, even my rose-cheeked and silver-bosomed child.

Shimar (*to the Princess*).—O daughter of the king of the great kingdom of Syria, thy father has been good enough to call thee unto himself.

The Princess.—Walk before me, O fortunate and blessed sir! walk forward, I am coming behind thee.

Shimar (*addressing the family of Husain*).—Turn ye to one side, for it is the queen of the city of Damascus that comes! Behold that full-moon* walking with perfect grace and glory.

Yazíd's Daughter.—Good-morning to thee, my handsome and brilliant-faced father; may wealth, fortune, and success attend thee for ever! Seat me like an unblown rose on thy glorious lap, or, to speak humbly, like an insignificant atom by the side of the magnificent sun.

Yazíd.—Come, take thy seat, like a rose-bud on my lap; let my bosom be ornamented with thy precious presence.

Sukainah.—O God, how is it I have no father, and am so despised? I receive no kind treatment from any one. O Musulmans, where is Husain *my* father, that he may seat me in *his* lap.

Yazíd.—Who is this little fatherless child, this bare-headed and bare-footed wanderer?

Shimar.—It is Sukainah, the daughter of the King of Hijáz, the beloved child of the thirsty-lipped† king.

Yazíd.—Art thou the daughter of the matchless king, art thou the joy of Husain's heart?

Sukainah.—Yes, I am the daughter of the king of the East and West. May God defend me, I am Husain's daughter.

Yazíd.—O little one, thou melancholy daughter of Husain, thou who art unable to bear thy calamity, having none to take care of thee, why shouldst thou heave flame-scattering sighs, and weep and groan?

Sukainah.—How can I do otherwise than cry or moan like a ringing bell? May no human being ever experience the things that I have undergone! I have suffered so many troubles, so many mental pains. I have seen my father killed and my brothers slain before my eyes.

Yazíd.—Weep not so much, poor desperate orphan.

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* See note, p. 7, vol. i.

† See note, p. 14, vol. i.

Sukainah.—How can I, being a mourner, refrain from tears, O Yazíd?

Yazíd.—Blood gushes out of my eyes, owing to thy sad cries.

Sukainah.—Six brothers of mine have died in my sight.

Yazíd.—Why has the colour of thy tulip-like face faded away?

Sukainah.—Because of my sufferings from thirst.

Yazíd.—Why art thou covering thy face with thy hands?

Sukainah.—Seeing all these are strangers and I have no veil.

Yazíd.—Have any of thy brothers remained alive?

Sukainah.—I have one brother left me, O tyrant.

Yazíd.—Where is that boy, O young lady?

Sukainah.—He is here, the poor invalid, but a captive.

Yazíd.—Tell me if thou hast any sister with thee, O miserable girl.

Sukainah.—I have one or two sisters left me by my father Husain.

Yazíd.—What are their names, tell me, thou hapless creature?

Sukainah.—One is called Rukayyah, and the name of the other is Zubaidah, O Yazíd.

Yazíd.—Thou art right, to be an orphan is no light matter; and none is like thee in such a distracted state, poor thing. Come to me, then, O Sukainah, I shall keep thee as a maiden for my daughter.

Sukainah (*grasping Kulsúm's gown*).—O aunt, I have not served as a maiden, I have ever been delicately nurtured, though I am now much despised.

Kulsúm (*addressing Yazíd*).—Who art thou who thus, thinking too much of thyself, wishest to enslave one of the sacred family of God's Prophet?

Yazíd.—Who is this zealous woman that raiseth her voice on high from among the captives? When she is excited to anger, her voice closely resembles the voice of 'Alí, God's lion.

Kulsúm.—I am the sister of the King of Karbalá, I am the queen of God's Paradise. 'Abbás the youth was my brother, he was the general of our army, a chief among thousands. I saw him with his hands cut off, rolling in dust and gore. Blood runs out of my eyes in sorrow for him. Yea, I am Kulsúm the sister of Husain.

Yazíd.—Declare unto me, O Shimar, thou meanest in the two worlds, where is Zainab the sister of Husain?

Shimar (*pointing to Zainab*).—This is she, whom thou hast brought low and made of no reputation. This is Zainab the sister of Husain. She is void of patience and self-control.

Yazíd.—Is this she whose father conquered the world by dint of his scymetar Zú'l fakár?* Is this she whose glorious grandfather was carried by God to heaven?† A thousand thanks that I have seen her, with my own eyes, put to shame, contemned, and despitefully treated!

Zainab.—I am the daughter of the begetter of seven and four.‡ I am the sister of God's beloved Husain. Though I am without a veil amongst men, yet the archangel Gabriel is no more than a porter at my chamber. I am the queen of the palace of chastity, the sacred damsel of the sanctuary of God. Behold! my sharp tongue is like the famous sword of the champion 'Alí. I have inherited from my dignified father a bitter, cutting tongue for the abuse of the enemy. By our Lord, I am able, with a single sigh, to cause the smoke of the whole world to ascend. But as my object is to have the privilege of making intercession for men, I refrain from cursing thee. When I went to Makkah and came to Karbalá, I had seventy stirrup-holders; though from Kúfah until I

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* See note †, p. 65, vol. i.

† An allusion to Muhammad's well-known "miráj," or "ascension on high," on which occasion the Prophet is said to have been carried from Makkah to Jerusalem, and thence transported to heaven, where secret mysteries and boundless knowledge were imparted to him. He also, so it is stated, entered Paradise, and adored the Most High in the realms of bliss.

‡ See note, p. 2, vol. i.

arrived at Damascus, Shimar with kicks would make me mount and dismount. When I was in Hijáz, I had eighty self-sacrificing maidens to attend on me day and night, but to-day I am myself standing like a maid-servant before a person who is himself inferior to a slave. I, who am now like an African captive, am Zainab the sister of Husain.

Yazíd.—I have nothing to do with thy father and the Day of Judgment, nor do I care about the fires of the abode of the lost, or its consuming flames. Bring me the heads of the martyrs, that I may entertain my new guest with the pleasing sight. (*The heads are brought.*)

Shimar.—These thirsty ones who have drunk water at the edge of the sword are the life-givers of the world, though they have yielded up the ghost. I deserve much favour from thee, and a splendid robe of honour, for the murder of the Imám of faith is not every person's work.

Yazíd.—Say what are the names of these heads, O hard-hearted man.

Shimar.—I will tell thee, one by one, without any addition or diminution.

Yazíd.—To whom does this brilliant head belong?

Shimar.—It belongs to Húr* the brave warrior.

Yazíd.—Whose head is this, O accursed Shimar?

Shimar.—It is the head of Barír, the son of Hishám.

Yazíd.—Whose are those couple of heads?

Shimar.—One belongs to 'Abís† and the other to Shauzab his slave.

Yazíd.—I see a black man's head.

Shimar.—It belongs to the slave of Husain the king of religion.

Yazíd.—Whose are those four heads that are so shining?

Shimar.—They belong to 'Abdullah, Fazl, Awn, and Ja'far.‡

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* See note *, p. 248, vol. i. † See Scene XV.

‡ See note *, p. 295, vol. i.

Yazíd.—I see two heads much resembling one another.

Shimar.—These are the heads of the sons of Zainab.

Yazíd.—There is a head there with an extremely brilliant face.

Shimar.—It belongs to 'Abbás* the standard-bearer of Husain.

Yazíd.—Tell me of the bravery of this valiant man.

Shimar.—Many a one he vanquished and overthrew.

Yazíd.—Bravo to his powerful hand and strong arm!

Shimar.—Yes, he was equal to Haidar† his father.

Yazíd.—Tell me, whose is this lustrous head?

Shimar.—It belongs to Husain's unfortunate son, Prince Akbar.

Yazíd.—I hear he had the happiness of being married.

Shimar.—No, he did not marry, it was Kásim his cousin who was thus fortunate.

Yazíd.—To whom does this little head belong, thou wicked Shimar?

Shimar.—To 'Alí Asghar‡ the suckling, deprived of its mother's breast.

Yazíd.—I do not see the particular head which I seek.

Shimar.—It is here, like a moon under a cloud of gore and blood.

Yazíd.—Bring it near, I am so anxious to see it.

Shimar.—This is Husain! this is Husain! this is Husain!

Yazíd (*addressing Husain's head*).—O ornament of the divine shoulder of the Prophet, thou art welcome! O successor of Haidar the warrior, thou art welcome! Thou didst not come with thy feet when I invited thee, yet thou wast forced to come to the general salutation with thy head, eh? Thou didst not wish to pay me thy respects alone, thou hast chosen therefore to be accompanied with Awn, Kásim, and Akbar; anyhow, thou art welcome. O Shimar, I have to ask thee a few questions.

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* See Scene XIX. † See note, p. 39, vol. i.

‡ See note, p. 174, vol. i.

Shimar.—Ask on, I have cheering answers for thy majesty.

Yazíd.—Didst thou sever this head with a butcher's large knife?

Shimar.—What does thy majesty mean by this question?

Yazíd.—Because the bones of his neck are chopped to pieces.

Shimar.—Oh, if I say, enemy and friend will both burn.

Yazíd.—Tell me, that the flame of my soul may subside.

Shimar.—May neither a Musulman hear it, nor an infidel see it!

Yazíd.—Didst thou sever the head by simply cutting it off, or by giving it many hard blows?

Shimar.—I did it with repeated strokes, like a butcher when cutting up the body of an animal.

Yazíd.—With how many strokes didst thou sever it from the body?

Shimar.—I cut it off, woe unto me, with ten blows.

Yazíd.—What did he say when he received the first blow?

Shimar.—He said, "O Muhammad! O Muhammad!"

Yazíd.—What did that destitute king say at the second blow?

Shimar.—He said, "O 'Alí, come and save me!"

Yazíd.—What did he say on receiving the third blow, poor thing?

Shimar.—He said, "Where art thou, O Fátimah my mother?"

Yazíd.—Tell me what he said at the fourth blow.

Shimar.—He said, "O Hasan, behold thy brother Husain!"

Yazíd.—Alas! what did he say at the fifth blow?

Shimar.—He said, "Woe unto me! Alas for Zainab's distress!"

Yazíd.—I wonder what his words were at the sixth blow!

Shimar.—He said, "Alas my fatherless child Sukainah!"

Yazíd.—What did the incomparable creature say when thou gavest him the seventh blow?

Shimar.—He said, "O the miserable condition of my wives after me!"

Yazíd.—Tell me, O Shimar, what were his words at the eighth blow?

Shimar.—He said, "Why, there is no fidelity, no zeal in thee, O Shimar!"

Yazíd.—What did he say at the ninth blow? I am so grieved for him.

Shimar.—He said, "O God, forgive my people!"

Yazíd.—What did that poor man say at the tenth blow?

Shimar.—He said he thirsted for a drop of water.

Yazíd.—Didst thou quench his thirst with somewhat to drink?

Shimar.—I gave him a kick on the mouth with my booted foot.

Yazíd.—What did he say when he received the kick?

Shimar.—He fainted, and died in agonies of thirst.

Yazíd.—Fill the moon-like cup with wine such as to dazzle the eye like the solar orb. O cup-bearer, make haste, for the revolution of the spheres has no pause. Remove the veil from the face of the lady of the jar,* and make the blood of lover's heart bubble up with joy. O cup-bearer, cast me like a drake in a great river of wine, where I may swim, and let the blood of ravens* be shed forth from the throat of the ewer. Come, O sweet-heart, uncover thy locks, make a meadow of roses with thy cheeks, burn ambergris, and fill the censor with pure musk. Take, O musician, thine instrument, and lifting up thy voice, play us some beautiful tunes in the best way thou canst perform.

Zainab.—O 'Alí, thou hand of God, place thy foot in the

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* *i.e.* Wine.

stirrups. Zainab's house is ruined; make haste! Put forth thy hand to the rings of the gates of Damascus, and pull the city down in the manner thou didst, when alive, destroy the castle of Khaibar.*

Yazíd.—Get ready thy harp, O musician, and make the hands of the ladies, and the fingers of the brides, red with the blood of their faces.† Once more, O cup-bearer, fill our glasses with wine. Let the heart of the cup-bearer of Al Kausar ‡ break from grief; and thou, O Shimar, torment the turtle-doves of the sanctuary of God by dint of kicks, sticks, and spears. Make the women stand on their feet at this splendid banquet, that the place may be filled with suns and moons, to our great delight.

Zainab.—Come out of Paradise, O faithful Messenger of God, and behold the beloved of thy Fátimah despitefully treated by the enemy. Husain the thirsty, whom thou addressedst with tenderest words, his head is in a wine banquet, and his body thrown on a heap of rubbish.

Yazíd (addressing Husain's head).—O thirsty-lipped king, it being a feast-day, I bid thee moisten thy dry lips with some dregs of the wine.§ Oh, what a sin! what a criminal

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* See note *, p. 45, vol. i.

† See note ‡, p. 118, vol. i.

‡ See note *, p. 96, vol. i.

§ "The crafty and able Muawia had died in the year 60, and was succeeded by his son Yezid. Before his succession Yezid had deeply scandalised the faithful. He drank wine openly; he was passionately fond of dogs, falcons, and other unclean animals. It was told of him that on one occasion intelligence was brought to him of the destruction of a Moslem army as he sat feasting with his friends. The young man turned indolently to a favourite slave girl, who reclined beside him, and chanted these verses:

"'What care I though death may have smitten our troops in the land of Roum,
When, softly reclined upon cushions, beside me is Omm Koltheum.'

"Under this genial despot a number of practices came into vogue which were utterly intolerable to the theologians of Koufa. The people of Damascus drank wine in the streets, in humble imitation of their spiritual head. They, like him, passed their time with singing girls and musical

thought! O Yazíd, have a reverential regard for the face of the intercessor at the Day of Account. What affinity is there between wine and the Kur'án? May dust be on thy head! Come, O boy, fill the ewer with rose-water. O royal personage, let me wash off the wine from thy sacred face. Being a noble Sayyid,* thou must indeed avoid drinking wine; let me wipe thy face with the skirt of my garment, O holy saint. Curse me not, dear sir, for the boldness; but rather bless me. Although thy vigilance must not be interrupted by making thee sleep, yet thou mayest take a nap in Yazíd's lap.

Zainab.—O chosen Prophet, look forth from thy sepulchre, and behold the head which rested in thy bosom placed now in the lap of Yazíd.

Yazíd (to Husain's head).—Ah me! I was reminded of the battle of Nahrawán;† take thy seat in this gold basin. O hand of God's hand, what became of the strength of thy arms? Arise, and put thy foot in the stirrup to ride. O

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professors. The sounds of musical instruments were constantly heard in the streets, and yet no one ever thought of stopping their ears, notwithstanding a highly authentic tradition which related that the Prophet did so when, on a certain occasion, he chanced to hear the profane sound of a shepherd's pipe. Finally, the votaries of other creeds, and the creeds themselves, were treated and spoken of by Yezid with a degree of indulgence hateful to the spirit which dictated the ninth Sura of the Koran, and which animated the people of Koufa. For this and other cogent reasons Koufa determined to revolt against Yezid."—Osborn's "Islam under the Arabs," p. 122, ed. 1876.

* "This title is often applied to Mohammed, who is called the Sayyid, or prince, of the prophets and of mankind. His descendants, who have become extremely numerous through the line of his daughter Fatimah and his grandson Husayn, take the same title, and are generally distinguished in Persia by the dark sea-green or blue colour of their turbans; or, if they wear the common Persian cap, they generally denote their lineage by some green garment or a green shawl girdle. A Sayyid, or descendant of their Prophet, is entitled to the most honourable seat in company, and, according to Mohammedan law, to certain contributions from his fellow Musulmans."—Meyrick's "Life of Mohammed," p. 393, ed. 1850.

† See note †, p. 136, vol. i.

unique of the age, since thou dost not choose to answer my words, be thou prepared to receive strokes on thy ruby-like lips from the cane in my hand.

Zain-ul-'Abid-dín.—Dost thou strike the kissing-place of the Prophet with thy cane, tyrant? Strike! but may thy hands perish! Thou art practised at cruelty. Yes, go on beating, for thou art an adept at infamy; thou art not wanting when there is an inhuman and wicked deed to be performed. Thou impudent fool, the Prophet of God is here present! and dost thou beat the beloved in the sight of its lover? Where is the chief of religion, 'Alí, to see thee beating his son on the lip with a cane? He being Jacob, and I his Joseph, in this Egypt of affliction, why shouldst thou do to the parent what is more befitting the son?

Yazíd.—Who art thou, O miserable wretched prisoner, suffering in mind and body, and firmly fastened with chains? With such dignity, glory, and pomp, if I am not mistaken, thou must be the son of Husain.

Zain-ul-'Abid-dín.—O Yazíd, thou loser of both worlds, may thy punishment ever increase! If thou art so blind as not to recognise me, listen, that I may introduce myself unto thee. The throne of the Most High is but a pavement to our court; the nine spheres are but a play-ball to our club.* I am the heir of the Sultán of faith, though now a prisoner in the army of the infidels. I can tell thee in a plainer way what my actual name is. I am the lord of the worshippers, Zain-ul-'Abid-dín.

Yazíd.—Dost thou see God's justice, how Husain was killed at last with a dagger?

Imám 'Abid-dín.—Dost thou think thou hast killed only Husain, and stained only his body with blood? It is not so. Thou hast slain the seven fathers and four brothers, the three daughters and six brothers. Thou hast murdered both the Prophet and his successor; thou hast massacred

* An allusion to the Oriental game of Chaugán.

both Muhammad and 'Alí at once, According to the outward appearance thou hast not slain above one soul, but in reality thou hast killed the inhabitants both of this world and the next. Thou hast wiped away both entity and nonentity, both eternity and time. Thou hast killed all creation with one blow, O infidel; thou hast shed the blood of God, O impudent wretch.

Yazíd.—O Zain-ul-'Abid-dín, according to this assertion and claim of thine, he is in no way inferior to God Himself. Open thine eyes and shut thy mouth; there is no good in such vain assertions. Listen to me and deliberately confirm my saying. Is it good for thee to be brought to my presence with yokes and chains?

Imám 'Abid-dín.—We do not complain of God's decrees at all. A lion is not ashamed to be bound in chains. But thou art vaunting foolishly before this thirsty-lipped martyr, O uncivil man. Thou must not boast in the presence of this chief, who, as regards glory, is above all, God alone being excepted. He is such an one that his father is greater than the parent of Muhammad, and his mother is the Prophet's own daughter. If thou hast also a mind to boast, talk of *thy* ancestry. Thou art, generation after generation, an adulterer, the son of adulterers and adulteresses.*

Yazíd.—Executioner! executioner!

Shimar.—May I be a sacrifice for thee, O Amír of the age, for the spring of whose life the autumn has come!

Yazíd.—Strike off the head of Zain-ul-'Abid-dín, the miserable wretch, that he may not speak thus in the presence of the by-standers.

Shimar.—Make thy confession of the faith, that I may strike off thy head, and cause eternal separation between it and thy body.

Imam 'Abid-dín.—Adieu, my helpless aunts! adieu, my broken-hearted sisters!

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* See note ‡, p. 251, vol. i.

Zainab.—O 'Abid-dín, may thy aunt die for thee! I see thee every now and then casting a glance at me; but I cannot help it, dear nephew. What shall I do? Full submission is to be rendered to God alone.

Sukainah.—O my suffering and afflicted aunt, my brother has stretched forth his neck to the executioner, being seated opposite to Kiblah.* Now the impudent Shimar will sever poor 'Abid-dín's head through malice. I beseech thee try some means of delivery.

Zainab.—O ye multitude who are here present, interfere and intercede if you are Muslims. Is there not one Musulman among all? Surely there may be; but the thing is unavoidable. I shall therefore beat stones on my head out of zeal, and putting a veil on my face, shall go to the ambassador from Europe and submit my case. O my well-wishing friend, I am about to make a statement that will bring every listener to tears. O ye sirs, for God's sake save us! save us!

The Ambassador.—O Lord, what is this I now see, which the eyes of the ancient time have never beheld? I wonder how the king of Muslims can have become an enemy to the faithful ones! Since the beginning of the world none has done this cruelty to his own fellow-believers. Yes, where there is much injustice it is right to make intercession for those improperly treated. O ye who are present in this assembly, let one of you intercede for these poor captives, who have none else but this youth to take care of them. Come, O executioner, let me kiss thy hands and feet, and beg thee not to kill him. Slay him not, I pray thee, until I go to the treacherous Yazíd, and pour my supplications before that dog; peradventure I may be able to obtain release for this poor youth. O Yazíd, have pity on these children, or make me a sacrifice for them!

Yazíd.—O noble sir, this delicate youth, thus brought low by means of fetters and bonds, is a lion's whelp fastened

* See note, p. 168, vol. i.

with chains; the sword is an honourable punishment for lions.

Zainab (*to Yazíd*).—Withdraw thy hands from the family of God's Messenger, or, by our Lord, I shall dishevel my hair, and carry my complaint before the court of divine justice. I will appeal to the Almighty Avenger against thy tyranny, and beg Him not to let any creature remain upon the surface of the earth. But now I shall turn my face towards Najaf,* and placing my hands on the sepulchre of the royal person buried there, shall utter grievous things against thee, that his zeal as a lion of God may be stirred up in a manner to make even the inhabitants of heaven tremble. O father 'Alí, 'Alí, come!

'Alí (*appearing with a veil on his face and a sword in his hands*).—Slay not, slay not! for Husain's daughters are orphans. Slay not, slay not! for Husain's sisters are in pain.

Zain-ul-'Abid-dín.—Behold my broken head, O grandfather! behold how they have tied up my hands behind my back!

'Alí.—I myself wished that thy head might be broken in this world, that I might be able to intercede for sinners in the Day of Judgment.

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* See note, p. 241, vol. i.

SCENE XXXI.

CONVERSION AND MURDER OF THE AMBASSADOR FROM EUROPE.

On the arrival of Husain's family in Syria, sad in heart, they raise to heaven cries of distress and complain bitterly of their cruel fate. An envoy from Europe, who happens to be at Damascus at the time, hearing the sounds, sends one of his retinue to inquire the cause of trouble. He had no sooner learned the misfortunes which had befallen the wretched captives than Yazíd invites him to a royal banquet. Dull and listless, he is unable to throw off the melancholy which overpowers him. Noticing this, his host thinks to drown his guest's care with wine and music, but "the sound of the harp had become like a solemn knell." Failing in his efforts to enliven the envoy, the inhuman monster sends for his captives, and directs his attendants to ill-treat them, thinking thereby to afford amusement to his companion. Again the attempt is unsuccessful. Yazíd thereupon orders the mutilated head of Husain to be brought in and made the sport of the assembled company. The ambassador, however, happened to have seen the Imám himself at Madínah, and the cruelty of the Syrian chief so rouses his indignation that he commences to abuse the wretch that could commit so foul a murder. As a consequence he is himself put to death, a martyr to the cause of the faith of the Prophet.

Zainab, the sister of Husain.—O God, where shall I go from the torments of fate, and what shall I do? My banquet-candle is cruelly put out by time, and I am left

in utter darkness. I am moaning in Syria like a sorry nightingale, while my rose-bush is left behind in the plain of Karbalá. O heaven, it is not proper that a solitary place in Damascus should be my lodging. What have I done to thee that thou shouldst punish me with banishment? Seeing my soul will not leave the body through hardships and distresses, better wrap me in shrouds while yet alive.

Kulsúm, a sister of Husain.—I am the daughter of 'Alí, the Prince of Arabia, the glory of the world. I am Kulsúm, at present an exile, a woman well acquainted with grief. I live among gazing strangers, without any veil * to cover my head withal. Woe unto me! all my confidants are gone from me. Alas! where is Husain my brother? Where is 'Alí Akbar my nephew? I have lost both my Solomon † and his ring.

Sukainah, the daughter of Husain (addressing Zainab).—Dear aunt, how long shall I be desolate—how long? For what length of time shall I suffer contempt, and wander about a miserable orphan? Till when must I coo like a dove, or moan sadly like a cuckoo? How long is this moaning bird to pour forth its melancholy notes?

Zainab.—Dear niece, how can I alleviate this pain, or mitigate this sorrow? By our Lord, there is no termination or end to this painful evil. So long as the breath of life is in thy nostrils thou must continue to sigh and moan, even until the Day of Resurrection comes.

Sukainah.—O Lord God, mercifully take thou my soul away, or heal graciously this irremediable disease. Either refresh thou my brain with the perfume of Husain's rose-like cheeks, or let me be in the presence of my thousand-songed nightingale.

Zainab and Kulsúm.—What shall we do with Sukainah, our poor niece, O heaven, heaven! Except that we bleed in heart for her, what else can we do, O heaven, heaven!

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* See note, p. 121, vol. i.

† See note, p. 81, vol. i.

Sukainah and her sister Fátimah the bride.—We two girls are sorely afflicted, O heaven, O heaven!

Zainab and Kulsúm.—O cruel fate, why dost thou aggravate Sukainah's case? Solve this difficulty and remove this trouble, O heaven, O heaven!

Sukainah and Fátimah.—We have no companions, no sociable or familiar friends. Oh! we are so sad in heart that we cannot describe it, O heaven, O heaven!

'Abd-ush-Shams, the Emperor's envoy.*—Ah! what a piteous cry! how impressively this child moans! Methinks she is lamenting the death of her dear father. I wish very much somebody would inform me of her melancholy case. Do any of you know anything about these miserable creatures? if so, let him tell me.

A Privy Counsellor.—We know nothing about these poor souls except that we see them sighing and wailing. They appear to be a few captive widows, caught in the hands of the inhabitants of Damascus. They are in a wretched condition, continually shedding tears. I believe they belong to some respectable family.

The Envoy.—Certainly, these captives cannot belong to any Muhammadan country, seeing the Muslims do not make captives of themselves; there is, I wot, perfect love and harmony among them. I think they are either Jews or Pagans. But God forbid that they should belong to any country in the West. I trust they are not members of any Christian sect at all.

The Privy Counsellor.—How long wilt thou grieve thy soul with unnecessary sorrow? Have no care at all; these are neither Armenians nor Franks. I think they are either from China or Mongolia; for so great an outrage could not possibly be perpetrated against an Armenian or Christian.

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* Nothing appears in the text, beyond the bare mention of the name, to indicate the particular envoy to whom allusion is made.

The Envoy.—I am much distracted in mind by their sad complaints and groans. Go thou to the town, and see what is the reason of all this uproar. Ask them why they are so deploring and bewailing; and inquire after the cause of their trouble and sorrow. Ascertain who that woman is who continually says, "Brother, brother!" and why she mourns so bitterly.

The Privy Counsellor.—O ye captive prisoners, why do ye pour down such a flood of tears? For whom are ye distressed, like Narcissus, in this flower-garden? To what party do ye belong? We cannot understand about you. Is your religion Atheism, Islám, or any other foolish creed?

Zain-ul-'Abid-dín.—O noble sir, we captive prisoners, whom thou see'st so miserably afflicted, are not from Europe; we are of the household of the Prophet of God. O sir, I am an orphan; my poor father has lately been killed. I am the afflicted sufferer named Zain-ul-'Abid-dín, whose protector has cruelly been murdered. Yazíd * has made the children of God's chosen Prophet fatherless. He has caused the daughters of Fátimah to be vagrants, and has made my dear aunts a sport for gazers. No cruel European ever committed such an outrage against his fellow-countrymen.

The Privy Counsellor (to Zainab and Kulsúm).—O ye two women, why do ye trouble yourselves so much? O ye pair of birds, why do ye sing such sad notes? O ye afflicted creatures, for whom have you set up lamentation? O ye two unlucky beings, why are you weeping and groaning to such an extent?

Zainab and Kulsúm.—O respected sir, we are two poor afflicted souls, two sisters, daughters of Muhammad the Prophet of God. We are destitute, and deprived of our home and family, like two birds that have lost their nests.

* See note †, p. 17, vol. i.

We never expected such days. We two sisters once had six brothers, the most renowned of whom fell in the battle of Karbalá. It is for him we are so bitterly lamenting.

The Privy Counsellor.—But who are these fair damsels who look like moons and stars? and whose death are they bewailing so deplorably? Oh, tell me, tell me, who are these precious gems, these lustrous pearls? To what tribe or nation do they belong?

Sukainah and Fátimah the bride—We two gems belong to one and the same mine. We two birds are both of one pigeon-house. Oh! we are worn out with excessive toil and labour. What shall we do, we poor orphans? Sir, we are the offspring of this people's holy Prophet. We two doves are cooing for one and the same thing. By heaven's tyranny we are made thus despicable. We are daughters of the king of the righteous.

The Privy Counsellor (*returning*).—Methinks mercy is taken away from the breasts of men. They have no sense of justice, no humanity. Who has ever done such a cruel deed, such an outrageous action? Neither Nimrod* the hunter, nor any other tyrant, ever showed such inclemency. We do not read of such cruelties as these in Pharaoh's† history. Surely not even an infidel allows such merciless persecutions against another.

The Envoy.—Thy notes, O musician, are too grave and deep. Thou bemoanest effectively; is there any painful or sad news? Well dost thou mourn; hast thou met with trouble? Thou seemest distracted in a melancholy manner; hast ought offended thee?

The Privy Counsellor.—Hear from me the story of the captives, O most excellent ambassador. I saw there some orphans and several widows. I beheld also a sick youth

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* See note †, p. 177, vol. i.

† "Pharaoh and his princes, who treated them unjustly."—Sale's "Koran," chap. vii. p. 128, ed. 1734.

bound with chains; albeit he was a handsome, good-looking young man. A girl was beating continually on her head, and saying, "O the memory of Husain!" Another would cry, and say, "Alas Hasan's son!" They belong to some noble family from among Muhammadans; but, thank God, they are neither Armenians nor Franks, so that thou needst not be troubled about them at all.

The Envoy.—Praise be to God that these captives are not from Christian nations! I am glad to hear that they are not our fellow-believers. O Lord, vouchsafe to set every prisoner at liberty; especially, O God, cheer the sorrowful souls of these wretched creatures.

Sukainah.—Dear father, my spring is turned into autumn. Thy absence has made tears run down my cheeks. Though thou art an exalted king, still thou mayest condescend sometimes to look upon thy dear child. Thy beloved little girl, O father, has, in a contemptible manner, been removed to this ruined place. I do not know why heaven has brought this misery upon me; my luck truly is unfortunate.

Zainab.—O dear niece, how long wilt thou groan so sadly and complain of heaven? Wailing and lamenting will not do thee any good; fate has decreed this, heaven has ordained it.

Sukainah.—The thought of being patient never flits across my mind. How can it be proper that I should dwell in such a ruined and miserable place? Oh! my heart is burning within me for want of a father. Where is my dear parent, that I may lie down in his tender lap?

Zainab.—Come to me, poor thing, and lie down in thy aunt's lap to sleep, beat no more on thy breast. O ye women, bereaved of your sons, I adjure you, by Husain's soul, be quiet awhile, and give up wailing; peradventure poor Sukainah, the dear daughter of Husain, may slumber in my lap.

Yazíd coming out of his apartment to sit on his throne, an Officer walking before him says:—His majesty the Khalíf

is coming forth with pomp and glory; have a care! O ye military men and generals of the army, stand in your proper posts. His majesty is coming out of his palace, intending to sit on the throne of his kingdom in splendour and magnificence; let both nobles and plebeians give way, and stand in awe.

Two Officers (*saluting Yazíd*).—God save thy majesty and prosper thy empire! May He make thee rule over the whole universe.

Two other Officers.—Husain, thine enemy, was killed at Karbalá, thank God! May this late victory be ever blessed to thee!

The former two Officers.—Husain is deprived of his life to-day. It is a festival day for the Sufiyánites.*

Yazíd (*to his Page*).—Go forth, thou youth, without any delay, to the envoy who has lately arrived from Europe. Tell him the Khalíf is seated with pomp on his royal throne, anxious to see his guest.

The Page (*to the Envoy*).—Arise, O ambassador, and hasten to the court, for the monarch of the age has summoned thee to his presence.

The Envoy.—O musician, play us some nice airs on the flute. Let our souls be touched by thy able fingers. Thou cup-bearer, away with thy dull thoughts, and stretch thy hand to the neck of thy decanter. And thou, O musician, take the glass of wine and quaff it, and then instantly apply thy breath to the flute or pipe. Let us in this way march forth, and betake ourselves to the royal entertainment.

Two Persons by his side (*singing*).—Alas! the spreading carpet of time is to be rolled up. Madínah has been destroyed by the ambitious desire to possess the country of Ray.†

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* See note ‡, p. 208, vol. i., and note, p. 203, vol. ii.

† See note †, p. 141.

The Envoy.—The pleasures of life and the delights thereof are forbidden us, seeing that we have not beheld the sacred city of Madínah.

The Two Persons.—All the joy and gladness under heaven have been defiled at once with foul grief. Since the spheres existed, such an horrible crime was never committed.

The Envoy.—The sweet sound of the flute is the dull ringing of the funeral knell to my ears; for the vernal season of the florid field of religion is attacked by dark autumnal days.

Yazíd.—O excellent envoy, shun not so much the society of Yazíd. Art thou for nothing avoiding my company? Come, sit down awhile; let us drink wine together. In vernal seasons it is not wise to abstain from drink. I give thee advice, listen to my saying, and never forget it:—"Never turn aside from a banquet, for all employments in this world are without any solid benefit; therefore, never give full attention to anything in this life, but always allow thyself to drink wine."

The Envoy.—I wish thee happy enjoyment and pleasure to-day and ever! May all thine enemies be vanquished before thee! May joy and delight alway accompany thy person! May victory and conquest ever attend thy army!

Yazíd.—O cup-bearer, help us to solve all our difficulties with a glass of wine. Remove from our hearts all sorts of besetting cares with thy tempting liquor. Praise be to God, I have been so fortunate as to witness the heads of my chief enemies hanging by their locks on the tips of spears. Come on, O cup-bearer, pass the bowl round another time, and make our friends quite mirthful and gay.

The Cup-Bearer.—O ye experienced drinkers, know that in this revolutionary time nothing can do the soul such an amount of good as wine. Welcome wine, the vernal season, and the society of the beloved! Oh, how happy if all three could always be easily obtained!

Yazíd.—Not every one who does not shave his head

can boast of the mysterious knowledge of Kalandarism;* neither are all who can make mirrors considered to be Alexander the Great.† Not every pretender to the Imámat has the privilege of being called an apostle; in the same way, not every one attempting to speak is termed a rhetorician. Thus does the flute proclaim on the day of Husain's slaughter! Enemies of Husain, rejoice on this your feast-day.

The Envoy.—Know, O Yazíd, no lute or harp can have any effect on me; musical notes make me sadder and sadder every minute; I feel so melancholy. Is the event of Karbalá mentioned in our entertainment? For the sound of harp has become like a solemn knell. The trill of the songster, or even his melodious voice itself, cannot cheer my mind a whit. Has any oppressed creatures wished us evil? or any widow bereaved of her youthful son denounced something against us? I wonder why merriment has suddenly quitted the banquet; for without any apparent cause, my light heart has become gloomy and sad.

Yazíd.—Seeing thou has frankly apprised me of the dulness of thy spirits, I shall manage this very minute to relieve thee from the burden of grief. O Shimar, go, please, to the ruined place which thou knowest, and fetch me thence, in a contemptuous way, all the captive prisoners. Bring here all the daughters of the Prophet, bound fast with chains, that his excellency may amuse himself with the sight, and, through joy, forget his sorrow.

Shimar.—Give notice to Zainab that it is time to bewail, for behold! Shimar is coming to the captives with his bottle

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* "The Kalandars are an order of Darweshes who shave their heads and beards, and abandon everything, wife, friends, possessions, and retire from the world. The order was founded about the commencement of the fifth century of the Flight."—Platt's "Translation of the Gulístán," p. 320, ed. 1873.

† "Alexander is said to have had a glass which showed him the whole world and all things done in it."—Eastwick's "Translation of the Anvár-i-Suhailí," p. 68, ed. 1854.

and glass in his hand. O Sukainah, behold! Shimar is approaching. Behold him angry with a whip in his hand.

Zainab.—Where is death, to relieve Zainab from her troubles? for I hear the voice of Shimar behind the wall. I am a weak woman, unable to do anything; there is none to help me except my sad groans. Certainly, if Sukainah but sees Shimar again, she will die through fear. O Lord, who will mourn here for Husain's orphan?

Shimar (*addressing Zainab*).—Wake Husain's orphan lying there in the dust on the road, otherwise I shall make her body black and blue with the whip.

Zainab.—Whip me as much as thou likest, O Shimar, but awake not Husain's child from her sleep. O Lord, have mercy on Zainab; see how unfortunate she is!

Shimar.—Rouse her from her sleep soon, or I will make her cheeks the colour of indigo.

Zainab.—Have pity on this wretched girl, O man; do not slap my poor Sukainah. Why, O impudent fellow, turnest thou my jasmine into a water-lily? Why makest thou Sukainah's face blue with thy cruel slaps?

Shimar.—I shall drag her now on the ground and humble her; if thou wilt not awaken her I know how to do it myself.

Zainab.—O ill-mannered, irreligious Shimar, I adjure thee by the Seal* of the Prophets (if thou hast any faith in him), not to add to my pain, for I have already a pallid face before Sukainah. Go away from us, O treacherous Shimar, and rouse not this girl from her sleep; go and hide thyself behind that wall a minute until I awaken her. She is much enfeebled since her father's death; she may possibly die through fear if she sees thee. (*To Sukainah.*) O poor orphan, arise, awake; it is not time to repose. O captive prisoner, awake, it is not occasion for sleep. Arise from thy slumbers; O sweet-worded orphan; fatherless children must not have rest after their father has gone.

Sukainah (*awaking*).—Dear aunt, I dreamt a sad dream,

* See note, ‡, p. 40, vol. i.

which has put me in confusion. It has made me altogether distracted. I dreamed, dear aunt, that Shimar again bound my hands as captive. He had his whip also in his hand. While that cruel villain was whipping me on the head, suddenly there arose the sun of my righteousness in the east; I saw my father with his face besprinkled with blood from his head, and began to speak with him on subjects of love and affection. Now I was complaining of him, now speaking fondly to him, when, on a sudden, I was awakened by thee.

Zainab.—Dear niece, thy dream shall be realised this very moment, for this very instant Shimar will come from behind the wall and begin to whip thee, as thou hast dreamed. But as to how thou shalt see thy father, it may be possible, but only on the other side of the grave.

Sukainah (seeing Shimar).—Aunt, aunt! behold, Shimar is coming upon me! Where can I flee for refuge? (*Shimar binds Sukainah's hands.*)

Zainab.—O Lord, let no child be deprived of its loving father! Let no father's shadow be lessened from the head of his offspring. May a woman never become like me, brotherless! Never was a woman bound with chains by a stranger in this fashion.

Imám Zain-ul-'Abid-dín (bound by Shimar).—O heavens! I am a fatherless as well as a sick boy! Is it good that Shimar should be appointed my doctor thus to treat me! O heaven! thou hast made my diet to consist of my own liver and heart. Thou wilt soon destroy me, O heaven! that I know full well.

The Captives being brought to the presence, Yazíd says:—Go on friends, drinking wine and spirits, and amusing yourselves with the pretty sight of these moon-faced* captives. My enemy is killed, we must set up merry entertainments; we must have a glance at the decanters, and snatch a sight at the fair captives.

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* See note, p. 7, vol. i.

Zainab.—O heaven, thou dost embitter my life by continually giving me new occasions of grief. The women of the Sufiyánite family are all behind curtains and enveloped in veils, whilst the daughters of Zahrah* are exposed to view before strangers and foreigners.

The Envoy.—Know, O sovereign, that my heart is made sadder still. The sight of these captives rather increases my grief. Yea, my sorrow is exceedingly aggravated by looking at them; please try and cheer me up by some other means.

Yazíd.—Go, O Shimar; in order to bring our joy to perfection, place the head of Husain on the brim of the roof over against us: we shall make the fire of Sukainah's heart blaze, and cause this gentleman also to forget his sorrow.

The Head (reading verses from the Ku'rán).—"I fly for refuge to God from Satan the reprobate. In the name of God the gracious, the merciful. Didst thou think (O Muhammad) that the companions of the cave† and Al Rakím were the most wonderful of our signs?" My

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* See note, p. 22, vol. i.

† "There were certain Christian youths, of a good family, in Ephesus, who, to avoid the persecution of the Emperor Decius, by the Arab writers called Decianus, hid themselves in a cave, where they slept for a great number of years.

"*Al Rakím.* What is meant by this word the commentators cannot agree. Some will have it to be the name of the mountain, or the valley, wherein the cave was; some say it was the name of their dog; and others (who seem to come nearest the true signification), that it was a brass plate, or stone table, placed near the mouth of the cave, on which the names of the young men were written. There are some, however, who take the companions of Al Rakím to be different from the seven sleepers; for they say the former were three men who were driven by ill weather into a cave for shelter, and were shut in there by the falling-down of a vast stone, which stopped the cave's mouth, but on their begging God's mercy, and their relating each of them a meritorious action which they hoped might entitle them to it, were miraculously delivered by the rocks rending asunder to give them passage."—Sale's "Koran," ch. xviii. p. 238, ed. 1734.

suffering martyrdom when I was overpowered with thirst, is more wonderful than any marvellous story.

Sukainah.—O dear me! my dream is at last realised, for my father has actually come, though somewhat late.

Husain's Head.—My dear child, the hair of my head has been entangled on the tip of a spear. This is the reason why thy father Husain delayed his coming.

Sukainah.—O companion of my burning bosom, peace be on thee! O my guardian in time of distress, peace be on thee!

The Head.—My poor destitute vagrant orphan, on thee be peace! O thou who art withering from my absence, peace be on thee!

Sukainah.—Father, why didst thou go to the Garden of Eden without taking thy child at the same time with thee? Why should the King of Arabia return to his royal home without carrying away his beloved daughter with him?

The Head.—My earnest desire to see 'Alí Akbar* made me forsake the world. I went with rent garments to Canaan by the scent of my Joseph's shirt.

Sukainah.—Thy death is sadly lamented by me, especially when I remember thy excessive thirst at the time. May I die for thee, father! thou didst go out of the world without a shrouding-dress.†

The Head.—Bear thou with patience, dear child, the severe pains of being an orphan; for I quitted this earth without shrouds for the salvation of my people.

Zainab (to Sukainah).—Dear niece, why art thou complaining of captivity? Smite no longer, I fear thou wilt die. Come to this side, weeping child, and burn no more Zainab's heart by thy flaming fire.

On Sukainah turning aside, the Head says:—Poor Sukainah, weep not, nor rend thy garments through grief; turn back, turn back to thy father, tell him the adventures of thy journey to Syria. Answer me when I ask thee ques-

* See note, p. 8, vol. i.

† See note, p. 27, vol. i.

tions, child. Dearly beloved girl, though thou art a restless orphan, pray let me know of whom dost thou most complain?

Sukainah.—Dear father, I am become a captive, an orphan, an exile, and wounded in heart. If I have ought whereof to complain, it is regarding my own ill-fortune.

The Head.—Tell me, child, if any one kindly washed off the dust from thy dear face; if any has combed away dirt from thy pretty locks.

Sukainah.—After thou wast slain, we met with nothing but trouble. Who would show the miserable orphans the kindness of a father? no one's heart feels for other children; none would repair the rent of their clothes.

The Head.—In this journey wherein heaven has grievously tormented thee, tell me, where hast thou fared worst?

Sukainah.—Thy captive family, O most excellent Imám, has fared ill everywhere, especially at Damascus.

The Head.—Though thy pains be many, thou poor little girl, yet tell me, what most distresses thee?

Sukainah.—I have suffered many troubles, dear father, but the severest of all pains to me is that of being an orphan.

Zainab.—Thy complaints, dear Sukainah, have made me again unconscious of myself. How long wilt thou sadly bewail? Come, repose awhile in thy aunt's lap.

The Head.—Zainab, dear sister, do not grieve me more. Do not remove my child from place to place so often. Tell me how thou hast behaved thyself towards my little orphan. When hast thou been pricked most by the reproaches of the enemy? Is my son 'Abid-dín still feverish, or does he now feel better? Has he recovered his health, or is he attenuated by fever?

Zainab.—Thou dost ask me about thy family, O dignified being; by our Lord, it is a hard question, and I am perplexed how to answer it. Every now and then they expose thy captive family and household to the view of

strangers. I am a single weak woman, having a caravan of captive prisoners under my care. These men are cruel and devoid of natural affection, and the world is full of commotion and uproar. As for Zain-ul-'Abid-dín, thy son, behold him wasting away with disease! Fever's heat from within, and the sun's rays from without.

Yazíd.—I am much disturbed by the turbulent noise of these captives; order them, O Shimar, to return to their ruinous dwelling.

Shimar.—Repair, O ye captives, according to the command of his majesty, to your desolate habitation; and you, O women who are bound, return to your lodging.

Zainab (to the Imám's head).—O adorable head, adieu! O martyr of the battle-field of Karbalá, God be with thee!

The Head.—Thou captives of an unbelieving nation, the Lord be with you! Go, poor sister, to thy ruinous abode. God be with thee!

The Envoy.—O Yazíd, to whose garden does this thornless rose-bush belong? Whose eloquent, pleasant-speeched, though severed head, is this? It is a mysterious pate; it must doubtless have belonged to someone well acquainted with divine truths. His eyes look, in my sight, like the eyes of the Prophet of God. His sweet, ruby-like lips breathe out eternal mysteries, and his complexion resembles that of Muhammad.

Yazíd.—Quaff thy wine, noble sir; let us not talk more of the sweet lips of a dry head. That is nothing; be no longer importunate respecting the matter. Think no more about it. There is no mystery or miracle in what has happened; I can refute all such assertions.

The Envoy.—Talk no more in this way, O thou sceptic infidel; nor deny the virtues of this bright face, thou blind in heart. Put off thy thick veil of scepticism; reason not thus, but listen to what I am about to say. O bodiless head, I am sure thou art substantially what I think. Wilt thou recite to us miraculously a verse of the Kur'án?

The Head.—In the name of God the gracious, the merciful:—"God is the light of heaven and earth, the similitude of His light is as a niche in a wall wherein a lamp is placed, which is enclosed in a case of glass, the glass appearing, as it were, a shining star. It is lighted with the oil of a blessed tree, an olive neither of the East nor of the West. It wanteth little but that the oil thereof should give light, although no fire touch it. This is light added unto light. God will direct unto this light whomsoever He pleaseth. God propoundeth parables unto men, for God knoweth all things. They wish to quench the light of God with their mouths, but God perfecteth His light, though the idolaters be averse to it." Hear me, O thou who art sad on account of my misfortune. I am the martyr of Karbalá, and my name is Husain. My father's name is Haidar,* the Lion of God, the prince of faith; my mother is the best among women,† and my grandfather is the Prophet of God.

The Envoy.—I wonder why the world was not destroyed at once, why the palm of mankind's prospects has not cast its fruit! When the head of this illustrious person was severed from the body, I wonder why Jesus Christ did not descend from heaven!

Yazíd.—Why, O sir, art thou crying for Husain? What has he done for thee in Europe? Where hast thou become so familiar with Husain? What connection have European infidels with us Muslims?

The Envoy.—No one, O Yazíd, ever engaged in a disgraceful action against himself like thou hast done. No European infidel, at any time, ever committed such an outrageous deed. I remember a strange anecdote about Husain and Hasan his brother, which I learned long ago during my stay at Madínah. I went one day to see Muhammad, and sat down at his feet to hear his blessed

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* See note, p. 39, vol. i.

† See note *, p. 42, vol. i.

discourse, when on a sudden there entered the mosque two brilliant moons, walking most gracefully, and approached the Prophet. The Seal of God's message on seeing them descended from the pulpit to receive them, and embraced both in his arms, now kissing affectionately Husain's throat, and now Hasan's mouth.

Yazíd.—Seeing thou hast begun to trill on miracles concerning this head, let us hear what else thou canst tell about him.

The Envoy.—How can I tell thee, O Yazíd, what I saw? Then the Arabian Prophet turned to Hasan, saying, "Hasan, hear what thy grandfather tells thee. Come forward, and wrestle, in a brotherly way, with Husain thy brother." Then the two tender plants of the rose-garden of Haidar the warrior took each other's hands lovingly, and began to wrestle. When these two young shoots of the red rose were twining with one another, each striving to throw his opponent, the Prophet said to Hasan, "Child, manage to hold Husain's leg, and trip him." On hearing which, Fátimah their mother, who was then present, exclaimed, "Father, thou honourable Messenger of God, tell me, why dost thou not instruct Husain to trip Hasan?" The trustee of God's revelation answered, "Dear Fátimah, be not offended, Husain has another to encourage him, namely, Gabriel,* who is constantly teaching him how to move Hasan from his feet, and trip him up." Well, O Yazíd, how can it be lawful that one served by the glorious Gabriel should be cruelly murdered by an unjust nation?

Yazíd.—Tell us, what else dost thou know concerning this severed head, if thou hast heard or seen anything else thereof?

The Envoy.—Furthermore, O accursed of all peoples and nations, I heard the blessed mouth of the Seal of God's Prophets saying to his companions, "Be witnesses of what

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* See note, p. 15, vol. i.

I speak, for I am the essence, but Husain is the quintessence; Husain is of me, and I of him. I and Husain are one. He who will injure Husain, God will eternally punish him in the next world." Why then, O Yazíd, thou accursed, wicked king, why dost thou not fear the everlasting fire?

Yazíd.—Hold thy tongue, thou Christian fool, and keep thine own counsel. Thou hast been altogether born in sin, and dost thou teach us? Thou hadst better go and think of thy Church superstition in Europe. What hast thou to do with Islám that thou shouldest interfere in this matter?

The Envoy.—O Yazíd, thou absolute infidel, pretend no longer to be pious, if this is religion which is practised by thee. Every sensible European would scorn thy creed, and regard it as a reproach to embrace it. But thou art an idolater, an atheist, and not a Muslim. How would a believer in Islám undermine the foundation of his own faith as thou hast done? Who but thou ever murdered the offspring of that Prophet whose religion he was anxious zealously to propagate among nations? Nay, even an infidel would not act towards another as thou hast done to the holy Husain. Was not this head the ornament of the faithful Gabriel's bosom? Was not this head a delight to the spirit of 'Alí, the prince of believers?

Yazíd.—Come, Shimar, deliver us from all mischief by cutting, before my eyes, the throat of this foolish Christian; for I fear, on his return to Europe, he will tell the tale to his countrymen, and they will begin to curse and abuse me among themselves. Kill him soon, that we may get rid of his tongue.

The Envoy.—Blessed is the head severed on behalf of Husain! Thank God I have become worthy to give my soul for him! O Husain, may I be a sacrifice for thy face, eye-brows, and eyes! May I be offered for thy head, which is severed from the body! Oh that thou wouldst talk to me on some religious subject, O head!

Be pleased to teach me the chief point of religious truth in Islám.

The Head.—If God's holy love has taken its seat in thy heart, say, "I bear witness that there is no God but the one true God." Come, for thy place is quite vacant here with us. Come, for thou must soon enjoy our society in the Garden of Eden.

The Envoy.—I am killed by the unjust order of Yazíd the accursed infidel. Who ever saw such cruelties as these, O ye by-standers? I go with all readiness to see God's Messenger. I therefore say there is but one true God, and no more.

Yazíd.—Prepare us a joyous entertainment anew, and let musical instruments play on all sides.

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SCENE XXXII.

DEATH OF RUKAYYAH THE DAUGHTER OF HUSAIN.

THE captives of Husain's family, in addition to the inherent miseries of their condition, have to endure, too, the scorn and insults of the Syrian populace. Amongst the number of spectators who repair to the desolate waste which forms the home of the wretched outcasts, is the daughter of Yazíd, her maid preceding her with orders to the prisoners to do homage to her mistress the royal princess. "Excuse me," is the firm reply of one of the descendants of the Prophet, "I am Husain's daughter, while she is but the offspring of Yazíd." The royal maiden then herself appears on the scene, and commences to twit the captives with their despicable condition as compared with her own state of pomp and splendour, bedecked in jewels and rich apparel. So bitter a taunt draws tears of despair from the prisoners. Softened by this display of grief, Yazíd's daughter takes pity on the family, and promises to obtain for them from her father the head of the martyred Husain. Seeing this, the Imám's daughter Rukayyah prays to God that she may be allowed to meet her father in Paradise. Her request is granted, and the same day she dies, asking forgiveness for the sins of all those who weep over her death.

Zainab.—Thou hast, O spheres, with extreme malevolence, made a ruinous place Zainab's abode; thou hast heaped up all the sorrows of the world in her lap. O tyrant, thou hast made my Husain headless by means of a dagger, and in this way malignantly quenched Zainab's banquet-lamp.

Zain-ul-'Abid-dín.—I must complain of thy oppression, O tyrannical heaven, seeing thou hast unjustly debased 'Alí's family. That sacred household, which disdained to have communication even with the angels of Paradise, were, by thy cruelty and ill-will, made to ride on saddleless camels, to their disgrace. So much barbarity on thy part not being sufficient, thou hast made us denizens of ruined places, too, O thou who art addicted to cruelty and oppression.

Rukayyah.—O my crowned grandfather, thou illustrious chief of all men, behold! thy daughters are captives and wretched prisoners. They have cast us, like African slaves, naked, hungry, and thirsty, into this ruinous place. Look upon Rukayyah's condition, O chosen Prophet; see how she always pours tears from her eyes for the sad event that has happened to her father.

Fátimah, the bride.—O glory of all the prophets, look down upon my sad condition; see how my days are blackened by my smoky sighs. Thy Kásim has been made a martyr, his lovely bride a most despicable captive. Oh, look for a while upon this my hopeless heart!

Kulsúm.—We are, O spheres, the flowers of Fátimah's garden, the nightingales of her rose-bush. O shameless heaven, how wilt thou, on the Day of Judgment, answer Fátimah's tearful eyes?

Rukayyah.—O my beloved father, why dost thou not come to me to-night? Why dost thou not hold thy destitute offspring in thy bosom? Seeing nobody deigns to inquire after the sad condition of thy orphan daughter, nor takes any notice of me, why dost thou not, my dear father, ask how thy dear child is? The morning of my hope is joined to the morrow of the Day of Resurrection. I wonder why this evening of separation has no dawn of delight for poor hapless me!

Zainab.—May I be a sacrifice for thy name, O memorial of Husain, the light of my eyes! Why art thou shedding tears to-night? Why hast thou faded away, O fresh rose

of the garden of my lap, and become like a melancholy nightingale deprived of its feathers and wings? I can no more see thee thus miserable; have compassion to-night on thy soul-distressed aunt.

Rukayyah.—Forbid me not to weep, O my desolate aunt, my eyes must to-night cause oceans of water to pass over my head. How many little tears have I tenderly brought up in the cradle of my lap in remembrance of my Asghar,* O aunt! My groans are entangled in my throat, O aunt, yet I know my father will take no notice to-night of the sad state of my sorrowful mind.

Zainab.—How long wilt thou let pearly tears drop from thy eyes? How long wilt thou make the heart of an oppressed woman like me break? How long wilt thou mourn in sorrow for thy brother, or weep in grief for thy father?

Rukayyah (*fainting*).—My soul has reached the tip of my lip in anxious desire to see my brother, and how long must I have patience in tribulation on account of my father's absence? My body, by reason of sorrow and grief, is become like a crescent. The time has arrived that I must set my face toward the next world. O the pain of being an orphan! how can I bear it? To whose face can I look for comfort besides my father's, O aunt?

Zainab.—O my hapless niece, open thine eyes. May the dust of the whole world be on my head! O memorial of those that are unfortunately gone from the world, O sweet-tongued girl, open thine eyes.

Rukayyah.—A thousand times thanks be unto thee, O spheres, in that thou hast made me a miserable orphan in the world. O father Husain, may I be a ransom for thy head, which is severed from the body! Oh, I cannot hear thy voice any longer in the world! What shall I do, O father, for thee? How shall I act? Oh, I can do nothing but burn and endure!

Fátimah, the bride.—May I be a sacrifice for thy soul, O

* See note, p. 174, vol. i.

Rukayyah, thou solacing companion of the afflicted ones, thou ringing bell of the caravan of the grieved souls! As thou and I are stars of the same constellation, and glorious pearls of the same shell, let us both prepare ourselves to weep and mourn for our father's absence; let us both throw dust on our heads, like orphans.

Rukayyah.—May I be a sacrifice for thee, O heart-rent bride! Let us sing sad songs in sorrow for our lost companions. Let us beat on our heads and breasts, grieving for our beloved friends, and lament in this ruinous place at Damascus for the absence of our dear father.

Fátimah.—Come, sister, mourn grievously; cut the soul to the quick with thy sad expressions, for we are despised prisoners in the corner of this desolate abode.

Rukayyah.—O my beloved Husain, my king both in this world and that to come, we are wretched and in bondage in this miserable habitation.

Fátimah.—O father, thou hast gone from the world, but thou didst not take thy daughter with thee. We are poor, ill-treated slaves in this revolting spot.

Rukayyah.—Where art thou, dear father? Why dost thou not come to us? we are desolate captives in the corner of this ruinous place.

A Damascus Girl.—O ye girls of the territory of Damascus, let us go and see those unhappy captives dwelling in that ruinous waste through the cruelty of our own wicked people. They are like the disc of the moon, so beautiful are they.

Rukayyah.—O Lord, we are prisoners and strangers in this land, deprived of the sight of our most beloved friends. How happy is the child who is so fortunate as to place its head in the bosom of its father! How blessed was the day when I was at Madínah, when this my heart was free from all pain and sorrow!

The Damascus Girl.—Alas! I cannot tell what sort of sigh is that which so burns the soul; it enters my heart like a piercing arrow. I hear a child weeping sadly, O

companions, and my spirit within me is ready to die for the poor thing.

Fátimah, the bride.—Where art thou, O father, the soul of the whole world, for whose separation the very marrow of my bones has begun to burn? Tell me, dear father, why the moon of thy beauty is hidden from my view?

The Damascus Girl.—O Lord, why are these two poor little girls so sad, and thus sitting on the ground in dust and ashes? To what orchard do these two nightingales belong? and why are they thus sighing and crying? Who are you, O ye two sorrowful girls? and why are you beating so much on your breasts and heads?

Rukayyah.—We two destitute and broken-hearted girls are both solitary creatures. We are helpless and friendless prisoners, and in a most miserable plight.

The Damascus Girl.—What have you done that you are thus rendered miserable, and caught as prisoners in the snare of the people of Kúfah.*

Rukayyah and Fátimah (together).—We are exiles, we are despised! May God send us speedy death that we may die!

The Damascus Girl.—There are many broken-hearted like yourselves, letting loose the bridle of their hearts.

Rukayyah and Fátimah.—Although there are many afflicted souls in every part of the world, yet none is in the sad state in which we two orphans find ourselves.

The Damascus Girl.—There are so many orphans in the world that one can count them by thousands.

Rukayyah and Fátimah.—Where will you find poor orphans like us put cruelly in iron chains?

The Damascus Girl.—Who killed your sick father, and convulsed your affairs?

Rukayyah and Fátimah.—The merciless Shimar acted thus cruelly towards us; he severed our father's head from the body.

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* See note, p. 9, vol. i.

The Damascus Girl.—Here are some alms for you, poor orphans; take the money, and pray for me in return.

Rukayyah and Fátimah.—It is not right, O Syrians, that we should take alms; it is unlawful for the family of the chosen Prophet so to do.

The Damascus Girl.—Tell me the name of your father, for I have lost all patience in my anxiety to learn this.

Rukayyah and Fátimah.—The thirsty-lipped * Husain was our father, the glory of the Arabs was our parent.

The Damascus Girls (*to one another*).—O ye girls, pelt these captives with stones in a cruel, inimical manner.

Rukayyah and Fátimah.—Oh, do not cast stones at us poor captives, for we are already troubled enough!

The Girls.—We shall beat you cruelly with stones, that blood may gush out of Zahrah's † eye through much grief.

Rukayyah and Fátimah.—We beseech thee, O aunt, to look upon us poor orphans; my head is broken with the enemy's missiles. Behold how Rukayyah's head is injured by the stones of this malignant nation!

Zainab.—O shameless and impudent maidens of Damascus, why are you pelting stones at our children? We are neither infidels, nor Jews, nor idolaters, to be reproached by you for our faith; we are the sacred household of your own Prophet. You must not pelt the descendants of his daughter with stones.

Rukayyah.—O my dear aunt, may the dust of sorrow be on my head! Had my father been with poor sorrowful me, how could they have dared to cast stones at me? Behold! all my body is bruised. O my dear aunt, have pity on the sad state of my mind, seeing the thread of my patience is snapped by the tyranny of this unjust people.

Zainab.—Enough sighing and crying, O my niece; be

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* See note, p. 14, vol. i.

† See note, p. 22, vol. i.

no more restless. My darling, do not shed red tears; come and lay thy head on my lap.

Rukayyah.—Come, O father, and help Rukayyah. Shall I seek thee at Makkah or at Madínah? or inquire after thee in the city of Damascus? Being greatly distressed in mind on account of thy absence, I shall wander about inquiring after thee until I find thee out. O Husain my dear father, where art thou? I can no longer bear to be separated from thee.

Yazíd's Daughter (*addressing her father*).—I beg thee to permit me kindly to visit that ruinous place and see the prisoners. Pray do not refuse my request, but kindly allow me to go and see these people of Hijáz.

Yazíd.—I will, provided thou goest with the daughters of Damascus, all merry and rejoicing, having your hands dyed with henna.* Thou must tell all thy maidens to take care of themselves, and to beat the drum before thee, and play on musical instruments. Do this to break the hearts of these destitute, miserable creatures, that thou mayest appear thoroughly happy and cheerful, while they scatter dust on their heads to show their grief.

Yazíd's Daughter.—O ye maidens, to prove your loyalty to me, you must all be dressed in scarlet robes; and tell the daughters of the territory of Damascus to be gathered together about me with perfect respect and deference. For I intend to go, together with you, to look at the captives belonging to the family of the Prophet, that the hearts of the destitute descendants of 'Alí may be broken at the sight.

A Maiden.—Be aware, O ye daughters of the territory of Damascus, thus hath the daughter of the most excellent Amír commanded, "Prepare ye yourselves to go in your best toilet to that ruinous place, and amuse yourselves by

* See note ‡, p. 118, vol. i.

looking at the family of the Prophet. You must set forth merrily, with timbrels, and drums, and other musical instruments, to the great annoyance of the descendants of the thirsty-lipped king Husain."

The Daughters of Damascus (*to one another*).—O ye damsels, go on beating the drums on all sides; play merrily on musical instruments, and sound the timbrel.

Rukayyah.—O my dear aunt, O my dear aunt, behold this treacherous people coming to see us poor wretches! How impudent these girls must be!

Zainab.—O daughter of the best of all mankind, O fatherless child, lament not; sit down and dry these tearful eyes of thine. Weep not, O poor orphan.

Yazíd's Daughter.—The descendants of Zahrah are made captives in the hand of wicked enemies; but my father has become the emperor of the world. Go on, beat the drum joyfully.

Rukayyah.—Dear aunt, what shall I do, being bareheaded, in this ruinous place, seeing these mean people have come on purpose to look at us, the miserable creatures?*

Zainab.—I shall hold thee like my soul in my bosom, covering thee with the hair of my head; so thou needst not weep, O desolate creature.

Yazíd's Daughter.—We have golden raiments, but Kulsúm and Zainab are meanly decked, being without a headdress; they are destitute of all sorts of friends. Go on sounding the drum and playing on musical instruments.

Rukayyah.—My dear aunt, my dear aunt, hear the taunts of the Syrians! how, reproaching us, they say continually, "Where is the chief of the thirsty-lipped ones gone?"

Zainab.—Be not sorry, O fatherless girl, nor shed tears down thy cheeks; with my moans and sighs I shall burn the root and branch of this wicked people.

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* See note, p. 121, vol. i.

Yazíd's Daughter.—Behold this weeping star! look at this tattered girl, whose visage shines like the moon.* As a contrast to the groans of this mournful girl, go ye on beating the drum and playing on musical instruments.

Rukayyah.—O my heart-rent aunt, I cannot bear the thing any longer. I am unable to endure being contemptuously pointed at with the finger of scorn by these girls.

Zainab.—Weep not, my dear niece, for the injury done thee by these unjust persons. I cannot manage to help thee, O homeless child.

Rukayyah.—May I be a ransom for thee, O my excellent aunt! look at these Syrian girls. They are in company with the accursed† Yazíd's daughter. Oh! I pray thee, aunt, hide me away!

The Maid of Yazíd's Daughter.—O ye assembly of captives, hasten all to go and meet the daughter of Yazíd, the emperor of the age. Rise ye from your seats respectfully.

Zainab.—Be thou ashamed, O maiden; use not such expressions before God's Messenger, O impudent, reckless woman. How can it be right in us to go out and salute the daughter of this wicked infidel?

The Maid.—O thou girl who lookest so distracted in mind, go forth to meet the daughter of the Sultán of Damascus.

Rukayyah.—Oh, have pity on me, a hapless child! excuse me, for I am Husain's daughter, while she is but the offspring of Yazíd.

The Maid.—Come, O little one, without any delay, otherwise I will take thee by force, and make thee perform the ceremony of salutation.

Rukayyah.—O Lord, have regard to my misery and desolation, and take my soul, O just and living God. By the oppression of the deceitful spheres I am become a com-

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* See note, p. 7, vol. i.

† See note †, p. 17, vol. i.

panion of misfortune. How can this thing be done, since I am Husain's daughter, and she is but Yazíd's child?

Yazíd's Daughter.—Withdraw thy hand from this sorrowful little girl, O maid, and break not her poor little heart. (*To Rukayyah.*) Why dost thou weep and cry? Why art thou afflicted with grief? Hast thou no father, O broken-hearted miserable thing?

Rukayyah.—Truly I have no father, I am a sore-hearted orphan! I am a poor despised exile, humbled by the cruelty of this revolving sphere.

Yazíd's Daughter.—Has thy father died that thou lookest so sad? Who has done this cruelty to thee, O unfortunate girl?

Rukayyah.—Know thou, O daughter of Hindah,* that they severed the head of my father from the body, through the tyranny of the revolving spheres.

Yazíd's Daughter.—How nice it is, O my worthy fellows, that this girl has no father and mother to take care of her. It is but just and proper that I should scoffingly tell her a few words to vex her.

A Syrian Girl.—O daughter of the sovereign of the age, O pearl of the sea of the Sufiyán family, although thou art a most lovely princess, and canst do what thou likest, still, seeing that thou art such an intelligent girl, I beg thee not to be unmindful of God. As this pearl belongs to the sea of the family of the Prophet Muhammad, and this bud appertains to his daughter's garden, will not the anger of the Lord overthrow thee if thou doest ought to vex her mind?

Yazíd's Daughter (*addressing Rukayyah*).—Behold my crowned head, O girl; see the pretty ring on my finger, look at my splendid gold shoes! Verily, by the Lord, we are really sovereigns: we belong to the highest family.

Rukayyah.—Behold the annoyance to which I am subject, O girl; look how I am bare-footed, O princess; see

* Hindah, or Hind, was the wife of Abú Sufiyán, the mother of Mu'áwiyah and the grandmother of Yazíd. See note †, p. 294, vol. i.

how a ruinous place has become my habitation. O Lord, we have no father; O God, we have no helper.

Yazíd's Daughter.—Look at my painted hands, O girl, and at my golden necklace; see the ornaments of my feet, poor creature. Verily we belong to a high family, forsooth we are in dignity like the heavens.

Rukayyah.—Blood is the paint for my hands, O girl; a rope is the necklace for my throat. See how my eyes are tearful! O Lord, we have no consolers; O God, we are sacred to grief.

Yazíd's Daughter.—Look at my beautiful head attire, O girl; consider how great is the father I have got; behold the numberless maidens around me! Verily we are sovereigns, in truth we are dignified beings.

Rukayyah.—O my dear aunt, for God's sake look upon my misfortune! She being the daughter of Yazíd, and I the child of Husain, why should I not cast all the rubbish of the place on my head, seeing I am bare-headed, while she has such a splendid sheet to screen her face? O my dear aunt, since I am but a little child and am thus despised in infancy, it is better thou shouldst pray for me that I may soon die.

Zainab.—Why should not both of us have died at Karbalá, and carried to the grave our sorrow for Husain? My dear niece, as thou art a destitute orphan, it is good for thee not to talk with children that have parents.

Yazíd's Daughter (*addressing Rukayyah*).—May I be a ransom for thee, O afflicted little girl, thy speech has made me devoid of patience and rest! Although I cannot redress my father's wicked conduct towards thee, yet I am greatly sorry for my own evil behaviour. Come, I pray thee, forgive my fault, and tell me what is the thing I can do for thee, my sister.

Rukayyah.—If thou art honourable in the sight of thy father, have the goodness to do me the following favour out of sympathy for me. Go to thy father and ask him to give thee my father's head, then kindly bring it to me.

Yazíd's Daughter (to her father).—O my father, my heart is burning for a little girl to whom it is proper I should appropriate the name of rose. She is, poor thing, living like an owl in a solitary place, through heaven's injustice; with sorrowing mind and tearful eyes, she begs thee one simple favour.

Yazíd.—Did I not tell thee not to repair to that ruinous place, lest thou shouldest be infected with its evils? Yet in spite of my admonition, thou didst go there, and now hast come back sad with a beating pulse and trembling heart. Well, what is the request to be granted her by me the infidel of the two worlds?

Yazíd's Daughter.—That poor creature plunged in afflictions and trials, has requested me to get her father's head. I pray thee give me the same, that I may carry it to that wretched prisoner.

Yazíd.—Go, O girl, to our private apartments, thou wilt find there many dissevered heads. Take the luminous head of Husain, the king of the East and West, and carry it with respect to his poor daughter, that the mind of the poor girl may rejoice.

Yazíd's Daughter (bringing a head).—Come out of thy solitary place, O Rukayyah, for I have brought thee the head of Madínah's king.

Rukayyah.—This is the head of 'Abbás* the standard-bearer, who was my uncle, my companion, my friend and my commiserator. O my uncle, how long, and till when, must thou be unkind and live separate from thy friends?

Yazíd's Daughter (bringing another head).—My mind is greatly agitated for thee, poor girl; I trust this is thy father's head.

Rukayyah.—This head, O Hindah's daughter, is that of my brother Akbar.† O dear brother, why dost thou shun our company? why art thou unmindful of our society?

Yazíd's Daughter (bringing another head).—Heaven is at

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* See Scene XIX. † See Scene XVII.

enmity with those who are called the authors of religion. Take this, I believe it is thy father's head.

Rukayyah.—This head belongs to my poor cousin and brother-in-law Kásim,* for whose disappearance I am so restless. Come, my dear Kásim, look at thy poor spouse, look at the sad state of this heart-rent young body, which longeth after thee.

The Girl.—There are so many heads in our house, it is better to let me know what are the marks or tokens by which thy father's head can be distinguished.

Rukayyah.—That head whose hair smells like ambergris, that head whose locks are soiled with blood, even that head belongs to my father, for whose absence I am shedding tears.

Yazíd's Daughter.—Do not set my soul on fire by thy sighs. By the Lord, I cannot know thy father's head.

Rukayyah.—My father's head has got a handsome face, and locks scented by ambergris. His eye-brows are like those of a Húrí† in Paradise, and his eyes turn about in expectation for me. Such is the head of my father, even the father of me, poor afflicted creature that I am.

Yazíd's Daughter.—O father, where is the head of the thirsty-lipped king. I cannot find it among the martyrs. Give it, I pray thee, to his daughter, that she may no more cry and sob on account of her father's absence.

Yazíd.—Here is the head of the chief of the martyrs;

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* See Scene XVIII.

† "But all these glories will be eclipsed by the resplendent and ravishing girls of Paradise, called, from their large black eyes, *Hûr al Oyún*, the enjoyment of whose company will be a principal felicity of the faithful. These, they say, are created, not of clay, as mortal women are, but of pure musk, being, as their Prophet often affirms in his Korán, free from all natural impurities and defects . . . of the strictest modesty, and secluded from public view in pavilions of hollow pearls, so large that, as some traditions have it, one of them will be no less than four parasangs (or, as others say, sixty miles) long; and as many broad." —Sale's "Koran," Prel. Dis., sec. iv. p. 96, ed. 1734.

take it to the girl, his daughter, in that ruinous place, that she may no longer be in distress at his absence.

Yazíd's Daughter (*bringing Husain's head*).—O ye troop of prisoners, Husain's head is coming. O ye company of mourners, the chief of the two worlds is approaching. Turn out to meet him, O ye his family, for the chief occupier of the seat of honour and glory is approaching you.

Rukayyah (*to Zainab*).—O aunt, the period of sorrow is come to an end, my luminous sun has entered by the gate. My father, having no feet, has come with his head to visit his children.

Zainab (*to the head*).—O King of Karbalá, peace be unto thee! O thou whose head is severed from thy body, peace be on thee! Dear brother, look at thy Zainab, for my heart and soul are burning for thee. Thou wast always favourable to thy child Rukayyah. Come, come, in whose hands didst thou leave thy daughter?

Rukayyah (*to the head*).—Peace be unto thee, O my dear father! peace be unto thee, O my soul and faith! I am so pleased to see thee, O beloved father! My soul had almost come to my lips without thee! I offer my life an humble sacrifice to be thrown at thy feet.

Imám Zain-ul-'Abid-dín (*to the head*).—May I be a ransom for thy luminous head, O father, peace be unto thee! I am so glad to see thee return from thy journey. Look at thy poor ill-treated 'Abid-dín, who has a pair of tearful eyes owing to thy absence. How shall I describe what the party of Yazíd have done to me! A thousand times mercy from the tyranny of Yazíd's people!

Rukayyah.—O great God, I adjure thee, by the merits of Muhammad the Prophet, and of this head of my father the thirsty-souled Husain, give me, O merciful Lord, the honour of seeing my father in the next world. After all these sorrows, let me have the joy of becoming Husain's companion in Paradise. Take my soul, O Lord of both the worlds, for I have no more strength to bear the burden of separation from him I love.

Zainab.—What is the end thou hast in view, O bud of the rose-garden of my heart? Inform me of thy circumstances, O beloved of my soul. Tell me, O sounding bell of the caravan, what has made thee thus silent? Dost thou, O spirit of my soul, intend to leave for a journey?

Rukayyah.—Know, O my aunt, thou light-giver of my blood-stained eyes, that I shall soon go to the garden of delight in Paradise; if thou hast any message to my father, tell it to me, thy poor sorrowful and weary-hearted niece.

Zainab.—May I be a ransom for thy soul, O light of thy aunt's eye, thou remedy of her oppressed breast. Now that being tired of this world, which is full of tribulation and anguish, thou art journeying towards Paradise to enjoy the society of thy father; give, I pray thee, my humble respects to him, as soon as thou shalt have the honour of visiting that beloved intercessor. Tell him, O light of all men's eyes, that thou wilt be missed in this ruinous place at Damascus.

Rukayyah (*to Imám Zain-ul-'Abid-dín*).—O dear brother, I pray thee to pardon me from the bottom of thy gloomy heart and soul. As I am going now, with blood-shedding eyes, to Paradise to visit our noble father Husain, thou mayest let this poor sore-distressed girl know what is thy message to that chief.

Imám Zain-ul-'Abid-dín.—When, O sister, thou comest to my father, thou shalt salute him in my name with tearful eyes, and afterwards respectfully deliver to him the following message:—"O the cruelty of the son of Ziyád,* O father! O the severity of Yazíd's wrath, and the infidelity of the people of Kúfah!"

Rukayyah.—O my sorrowful sister, O Fátimah, thou light of my eye! I am going to thy spouse, O thou ointment of Kásim's ulcerated soul!

Fátimah.—O fresh plant of the garden of Paradise, O my poor wandering sister! when thou meetest Akbar my

* See note *, p. 177, vol. i.

brother, give him, O my sister, a hearty kiss from me. Yea, give my love to Akbar and Kásim the faithful, saying, "I am in great trouble for you. I am carrying your grief with me to the grave."

Rukayyah.—Adieu, my sore-pressed aunt; adieu, O my desolate sisters. Adieu, O 'Abid-dín, thou vexed in soul. Adieu, O homeless and destitute one. Adieu, my dear aunt, let me kiss thy feet, for I am in distress and sorrow.

Zainab.—Separation! O Rukayyah, thou groaning child, alas separation! let me behold thy tearful eyes.

Rukayyah.—Separation! O my homeless aunt. Separation! O sad-hearted Zainab.

Zainab.—Separation! thou art cheerfully going to Husain thy father, the king of the age.

Rukayyah.—Separation! O my aunt, thou who has suffered so many troubles for my sake.

Zainab.—Separation! O poor moon-faced orphan, I have not suffered the least trouble on thy account.

Rukayyah.—Separation! O companions of sighs and sobs, I am much obliged to thee for thy care.

Zainab.—Separation! O light of my eyes, thou nightingale of the garden of my soul, make no mention of what I have done for thee.

Rukayyah.—O great God, I adjure thee, by Husain's light, and by his subverted camp and pavilion, forgive, for my wet eyes sake, the sins of all those who weep over my calamity. I am going now with groans and sighs from this world, bearing witness that there is no God but God. (*Dies.*)

Zainab.—O how hard it is to die in a foreign land, how difficult to give up the ghost in captivity! Come, my niece, let me close thy eyes, let me stretch thy hands and feet towards the Kiblah.* O God, we poor exiles have nothing for our pillow but broken bricks.

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* See note, p. 168, vol. i.

Kulsúm.—O Lord, strangers have none to care for them, they are despicable and mean in the sight of the world. Should even a king die in a place far from his country, they carry him to his grave with disgrace.

Imám Zain-ul-'Abid-dín.—O God, poor Rukayyah has died in regret and grief. What shall I do, seeing I cannot get any one to have her buried? Bring, O aunt, a pick-axe, that I may dig my sister a grave in this place, and set the world on fire with my sighs and groans.

Zainab.—How I am unfortunately entangled in misery! I myself must dig a grave for my poor desolate niece. None cares for a stranger in exile, unless the God of poor wandering souls Himself be moved in compassion towards such miserable creatures. At the time of death none even deigns to pour some drops of water down an exile's throat, nor will anybody be so good as to stretch an outcast's feet towards the Kiblah.

SCENE XXXIII.

RELEASE OF HUSAIN'S FAMILY FROM CAPTIVITY.

When *Obeidollah's* express came to *Yezid,* and wished him joy of his success, and the death of *Hosein, Yezid* wept, and said, 'I should have been very well pleased without the death of *Hosein.* God curse the son of Somyah! if I had had him in my power I would have forgiven him.' . . . He entertained the women with all possible respect in his palace. . . . . After they had taken a competent time for their refreshment, and were resolved upon their journey to *Medinah, Yezid* sent for his wives and children to take their leaves, and commanded *Nooman* the son of *Bashir* to accommodate them with all necessary provisions, and send them home with a safe convoy. When he dismissed them he said to Ali, "God curse the son of Marjánah! if your father had fallen into my hands, I would have granted him any condition he would have desired, and done whatsoever lay in my power to have saved him from death, though it had been with the loss of some of my own children. But God hath decreed what you see. Write to me; whatsoever you desire shall be done for you."—Ockley's "History of the Saracen's," vol. ii. p. 181, ed. 1757.

Yazíd (to Imám Zain-ul-'Abid-dín).*—May I be a ransom for thee, O light of the eye of nature! I have a petition to thee, which I hope thou wilt be good enough to accept.

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* See note †, p. 96, vol. i.

Being repentant and ashamed at the evil I have done, I beseech thee to stay at Damascus, that I may serve thee as one of thy meanest slaves, and that I may place Syria, Mesopotamia, and the Hijáz under thy holy jurisdiction, O highly dignified Imám.

Imám Zain-ul-'Abid-dín.—The garden of Irán without Husain is to me as a prison full of trials. The whole world without Husain would be Karbalá to us. Do not consider us as living beings without Husain. We deem ourselves dead, and Damascus, the abode of pleasure, is to us but a cemetery for the reception of our bodies. Now that Husain is dead, Madínah, the place where our grandfather is buried,* is the best suited for us.

Yazíd.—May the curse of God fall on 'Ubaidullah, who killed Husain out of sheer spite. It must have been the decree of the Almighty that Husain should thus be slain, and things that are ordained by God must take place. Be so kind as to pardon what has occurred, and to forget what befell at Karbalá. A jar that is shattered to pieces cannot be put together again, and the Lord hath said, "If you suffer loss, do not grieve over it."

Imám Zain-ul-'Abid-dín.—Oh! how is it possible that I should forget events that have made such an impression on me? How can I pardon the loss of such precious blood, O Yazíd, despised as thou art by all men, good and bad? Thou reprobate! granting I was pleased to overlook some of the things that have befallen us, how could I pass over the act of that cruel accursed Shimar, who, when my father was on the point of death, and reeking with wounds and thrusts from his sacred body, actually gave him a hard kick on his meek and humble breast, and then drew out his merciless sword, and in an ostentatious manner severed my poor father's head from the neck while the lips were parched from thirst?

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* See note *, p. 84.

Yazíd.—I beseech thee to forget and to forgive our wrong doings, and to dispel from thy mind the murder of Husain, so that we may not be uneasy any more on this account. Let by-gones pass for ever from memory, and turn thy attention to things appertaining to present existence.

Imám Zain-ul-'Abid-dín.—Hast thou the impudence again to ask me to forget the incidents of Karbalá? Were my bones to turn to dust and be scattered by the wind, I could not efface from my mind the massacre of Husain, nor banish from my thoughts the sad recollection of his murder. Is it possible that I should forget the arrow which the archer darted on the mouth of that king of religion, or lose remembrance of the missile despatched by Sinán* at the throat of the chief of the thirsty-lipped martyrs?

Yazíd.—In lieu of Husain's blood, I will give thee whatever thou mayst desire, if thou be so gracious as to forget what is past. Take the kingdoms of Bat-há† and Yaman as the price of 'Abbás' blood, and let the countries of India, China, and the whole of Tartary belong to thee in lieu of the blood of Akbar the similitude of the Prophet; and for the blood of Husain the king of all nations, I offer thee, O respected being, all the treasures which my empire may hold.

Imám Zain-ul-'Abid-dín.—Be ashamed of thy sayings, O merciless tyrant. O impudent wretch, thou hast cut off the posterity of the best of the prophets from the land of the living. Thou hast demolished the house of faith by the rage of thy malice. Thou hast slain some of our young men, the like of whom cannot be found in the whole world. The price of the blood of the martyrs cannot be paid for in money or possessions, its only recompence is the

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* See note ‡, p. 105.

† See note †, p. 182, vol. i.

merit of being able to intercede with God for sinners. Hold thy tongue, thou accursed* wretch, and cease such unworthy importunity. Send us back to the shrine of the Lord's Prophet in Madínah, for thy arguments will never be approved by the Creator.

Yazíd.—O worthy Bashír, be a companion to the family of the Prophet on their present journey. Prepare, O virtuous Bashír, litters of gold, that the sacred family of the Prophet may be conveyed in all honour to the home of that king of righteousness. Look out that the ill-starred Zainab is not troubled on her journey back. If Sukainah fret for her father, thou must comfort her with solacing words, and beware that thou obey every order that Zain-ul-'Ábid-dín may issue to thee.

Bashír.—I have been for a long time earnestly wishing and desiring that I may have this duty to perform, and I assure thee that I shall most willingly carry out thy orders; all my attention shall be devoted to this work, and I shall be very assiduous. I will serve Sajjád† with humility and sincerity, in hopes of being rewarded with a bright face on the Day of Promise.

Zain-ul-'Abid-dín.—Mock us not, we pray thee, O impudent creature. Painted litters and coloured garments do not suit our mournful condition. The blood of Husain's throat is yet fresh, and his head still keeps its eyes fixed on us. Sukainah's face is even now blue from the severity of the slaps she has received, and my back is still smarting from the effects of the lashes it received. My side is at the present time in pain from the dart of the spear, and my neck yet sore from the pressure of the rough rope put round it. Husain's blood continues to drop from Shimar's dagger;‡

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* See note †, p. 17, vol. i.

† Imám Záin-ul-'Abid-dín "is also occasionally referred to by the appellation of Súj aud, the ever prostrate or adoring."—Price's "Chronological Retrospect of Mahommedan History," vol. i. p. 373, ed. 1811.

‡ See note, p. 43, vol. i.

how can we sit on thrones in his presence? After the loss of Husain and our other companions, the most suitable thing for us is a coffin or planks for a bier, not a Takht-i-Rawán.* O hopeless tyrant, the only things that befit us are black garments, and litters covered with black cloth.

Yazíd.—Go and cover the Kajáwahs † of these poor captives with black cloth, as that is the most appropriate colour for mourners. Put on thy dress of honour with beseeming respect, and accompany the king of the Hijáz to his home.

Bashír.—O mighty Amír, I am thy most obedient servant; I will carry out thy orders, and cover the litters with black cloth. O faithful servants, cause the gilded litters to be draped with black cloth.

Imám Zain-ul-'Abid-dín.—O oppressed aunt, may I be a sacrifice for thee! What makes thee look around as if something were wanting, or somebody was expected? Please mount, that the rest of the family may do the same, and proceed homewards with bitter thoughts.

Zainab.—Wherever I turn, whether to the right or the left, I am unable to see my destitute and blood-stained Husain. Oh! why does Sukainah smite her head? Has 'Alí Akbar‡ not accompanied her? Why do I see you all miserable, and looking uncomfortably about you? Is it because Husain has not yet mounted his Zú'l janáh?§ Why is the mother of Asghar‖ so sad? Is it because her milkless child is not awake?

Imám Zain-ul-'Abid-dín.—O dear aunt, may my scorched heart be sacrificed for thee! I swear by the Almighty that thy sayings have deprived me of all fortitude. My father

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* Literally a "moving sofa or couch." "Takhtrawan, or litters, carried between camels or mules, with scarlet and brass trappings."—Burton's "El Medinah and Meccah," vol. i. p. 400, ed. 1857.

† "Kajáwah," a camel-litter for females.

‡ See Scene XVII.

§ See note, p. 242, vol. i.

‖ See note, p. 174, vol. i.

has been maliciously slain, and we are all in grief for him. Mount, dear aunt, we have no resource but to be patient. Raise up thy standard of groans and sighs like one in chief command, and we will follow with weeping and lamentation towards the plain of Karbalá.

Zainab.—O thou crowned being, lauded in the chapter of the Kur'án beginning with the initials Yá Sín,* O thou cavalier of the famous battle-field of Karbalá, behold how all the members of thy family are mourning like melancholy nightingales, and are sad and destitute. O most noble king, thou art reposing on the black earth without a rag of clothing. O precious pearl, what misery is this?

Bashír (*at the head of the caravan*).—I proceed, with a bleeding heart and blood-shedding eyes, towards the plain of Karbalá, and with sighs, weeping, and lamentation. O friends, I am going, with wailing and groaning, to Karbalá for the honour of kissing Husain's feet.

Sukainah.—I am Sukainah, the sorrowful daughter of Husain, and am proceeding to Karbalá with plaintive tones and shrieks; for I am distressed, and am going, with blood pouring from my eyes, to visit the martyrs.

Zainab.—My heart palpitates at the mention of the name of Karbalá. My head has been covered with the clay of sorrow; my own eyes saw the body of Husain cut to pieces. Woe unto me! my dear brother was slain with the dagger of the accursed Shimar.

Sukainah.—May I be a ransom for thee, O sorely-depressed aunt! why are we so late in arriving at the stage this dark night? Is the spot far or near, O aunt?

Zainab.—O thou tear-shedding child, may I be a ransom for thee, O blasted rose of Husain's vernal garden! Though

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* "The meaning of these letters is unknown. Some, however, from a tradition of *Ebn Abbas*, pretend that they stand for Ya Insán, *i.e.* O man." —Sale's "Koran," chap. xxxvi. p. 361, ed. 1734.

the night be dark like the evening of those afflicted with sorrow, yet thou needst not be troubled, for thou see'st the morning is at hand.

Sukainah.—The sighs of my heart do not relieve me. I believe my night has no morning light to succeed it. How long is my breast to receive the darts of heart-piercing sighs, night and day? O bird of the morning, what ails thee that thou wilt not utter thy song? Art thou a broken-winged creature like myself? Wilt thou not give me a reply, O desolate bird? Surely thou must be asleep, like my destiny.

Bashír (to the Prophet's family).—O sacred tenants of the pavilion of the two worlds, I adjure ye, by the soul of Husain, not to weep any more. We have arrived at a place where the road divides—one path leads to Madínah, and the other to Karbalá. Please tell me which way you are inclined to take—the one that leads direct to Madínah, or the other that passes through Karbalá?

Imám Zain-ul-'Abid-dín.—The mention of Karbalá, O Bashír, has, alas, kindled a flame in my heart! Thy speech, O comely personage, has set my soul on fire. O Bashír, thy words have added pain to my sorrows. May I be a sacrifice for Karbalá! yea, even for its very dust. I have an earnest desire to see the plain, and am resolved to visit that musk-scented land.

Sukainah.—O kind and good Bashír, thou who knowest so well how to make one happy, we expect from thee the favour of taking us to Karbalá. The only desire of my heart is to see my father, for my weary soul is in flames consequent on his protracted absence.

Zainab.—O Bashír, I adjure thee by the Lord and His Prophet, and by the luminous sepulchre of 'Alí, the cŭp-bearer of Al Kauzar,* that, if thou hast a mind to please me, thou wilt take me to Karbalá instead of to Madínah.

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* See note *, p. 96, vol. i.

Imám Zain-ul-'Abid-dín.—O gracious aunt, may I be a sacrifice for thee! Refrain from tears, I pray thee. The road to Karbalá is before us. Cease thy sobs, for we are now proceeding towards thy brother's abode.

Zainab.—O 'Abid the invalid, may I be a sacrifice for thee! Forbid not this oppressed woman to weep and mourn. Dost thou not know what I have suffered at the hands of this black-hearted nation? From Karbalá to that ruin in Damascus we were led bare-headed. I swear by the Almighty that my weeping is involuntary. I can have no rest now that Husain is no more.

Imám Zain-ul-'Abid-dín.—Alas, alas! thy words inflame me. Thou bringest to my memory the incidents of that cruel treatment that we experienced at Damascus. It was thy lot, dear aunt, to be a captive, to be treated with tyranny and oppression, and to be made a fellow-traveller with thirty thousand strangers.

Zainab.—Woe unto me! woe unto me! I am unable to say what land this is. My olefactory nerves detect the scent of blood in this wilderness. Tell me, dear nephew, whence this perfume of blood cometh. If I mistake not, this is the land of Karbalá, to which we are bound. Is the stream from Husain's throat still flowing, that I smell such a strong odour of blood in this place?

Imám Zain-ul-'Abid-dín.—O gracious aunt, may I be a sacrifice for thee! We have to a certainty arrived at the scene of our father's murder, for I constantly inhale the fragrant smell of Husain. God is witness, dear aunt, that I have become utterly restless.

Bashír.—O ye camel-drivers, lead the camels with your hands, and carry ye the sacred family of Husain to Karbalá, that, with bleeding hearts and tearful eyes, they may perform the ceremony of visiting Husain's sepulchre.

Sukainah.—I hope, dear aunt, to have the happiness of visiting the ashes of Husain my father. As soon as it is morning I shall fervently embrace the holy sepulchre, and

relate to my father the sad story of what befell us in Damascus.

Zainab.—O ye oppressed creatures, weep no more. Allow your overcharged hearts to have some rest. Let us lodge to-night in this place, and in the morning we shall arise and go to the sepulchre.

SCENE XXXIV.

DEATH OF ZAINAB.

On the return of Husain's family to Madínah the inhabitants of that city gladly welcome Zain-ul-'Ábid-dín as their Imám, and beg of him to ascend the pulpit in the Mosque, and, delivering an address, to expatiate upon the sufferings of the martyred Husain and his slaughtered family. Meanwhile a certain busy-body betakes himself to Yazíd, and informs him how the youthful survivor of the fatal massacre of Karbalá is at Madínah claiming to be the true Khalíf; whereupon the tyrant repairs to the latter city, and once again the unhappy outcasts feel the weight of his cruelty, and are led away captive. Amongst the members of the family thus carried back to Syria is Husain's sister Zainab, who so dreads the fate that awaits her that she prays for death to overtake her. "O great God, I adjure Thee by the verity of Thy Prophet and by the merit of the blood-stained head of 'Alí, the cup-bearer of Al-Kauzar, make it not my lot, O glorious Creator and Lord of All, to see with mine eyes again the unsightly face of Yazíd. Nay, bring rather the day of my life to a close." Her request is granted, and she shortly dies on the way, having previously handed over to the custody of her sister Kulsúm the precious relics of the family—so precious indeed, that the merit thereof is to be accepted in the Last Great Day as an intercession for the sins of mankind!

*Zain-ul-'Abid-dín.**—Alas thy cruelties, O merciless sky, whose habit is injury, whose custom is malice, whose manner is obstinacy! Why wast thou not subverted, O

* See note †, p. 96, vol. i.

pitiless heaven, at the time when Shimar* put his dagger at my father Husain's throat?

Zainab.—Alas thy tyranny and oppression, O cruel spheres! Let me make loud complaints against thy many injustices. I am weary of my existence, since I cannot see my dear Husain's face. How tenacious of life am I, that, notwithstanding all these griefs, I do not die!

Kulsúm.—O spheres, may the curtain of thy day and night be rent asunder! may thy stars drop as tears down thy cheeks! Mine eyes are about to become blind through excess of grief for Husain. May meteoric darts pierce thine eyes, thou base spheres!

Fátimah, the bride.—O heaven, who ever in this world saw a bride put on black garments and mourn on the day of her joy? I have become an orphan, vagrant, and despised by all. Unjust fate has allotted to me tearful eyes.

Sukainah.—Sukainah, O Lord, is an exile in her own land, and has neither friends nor relations to visit her. All the people of my country are rejoicing cheerfully except I, who am sighing and complaining. Oh, I was reminded of that instant when the shameless Shimar severed my father's head from the body with his sharp sword, thereby afflicting me with the grievous pain of this untimely separation.

Zainab.—Do not beat on thy head and breast, O Sukainah. I fear lest thou die through over-grief, O sorrowful creature. When thou wast in the ruinous habitation in the city of Damascus thou didst continually make mention of Madínah, and now that thou art come to that city, thou dost not cease filling thy lap with tears of blood. Tell me, why doest thou thus, O thou distracted, desolate girl?

Sukainah.—If it be Madínah, aunt, where is my honoured father? If it be Madínah, why do I not see 'Alí Akbar?† Madínah without my father cannot afford me pleasure.

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* See note, p. 43, vol. i.

‡ See Scene XVII.

Madínah without the rose of his face leaves but scars on my heart.

Zainab.—Zainab is very weary of her life; what can I do, dear niece? Thus was it predestined by God that thou shouldst become fatherless, destitute, and helpless, and return to Madínah. Have patience; may I be a ransom for thy moist eyes! Have patience, as regards what has befallen thy father.

Sukainah.—Teach me, dear aunt, how to forget this sorrowful event. I cannot obliterate the remembrance of my father's tragedy from my recollection. Thou didst prevent me from remaining in Karbalá with my father; now, how great is the distance between Madínah and Karbalá! Come, dear aunt, for my sake, commence to mourn for the martyrs of Karbalá.

Zainab (*to Kulsúm*).—O my sister, thou brightness of 'Alí's eye, take the trouble to bring me, O thou who art afflicted with grief, the garments of those slain in Karbalá, that we may set up lamentations for the martyrs, thereby making even the very angels and jinns* weep and deplore.

Kulsúm.—O my poor distressed sister, take from me the clothes of the martyrs, and moan with fervour of heart, O sorrowful one, in remembrance of those slain and drenched in blood at Karbalá.

Zainab.—Come and sit in a circle around me to lament, ye companions; sing mournful songs for the misfortune of those who died with thirst. And thou, O good Kulsúm, take this standard of 'Abbás', stained with blood, and bear it, to remind us of his office.† This is the thing, O Sukainah, that thou, the brightness of mine eyes, must do: hold thou up the blood-stained dress of little Asghar.‡ Take thou, O Fátimah, the coat of Akbar; and also, O bride of Kásim, the shirt of thy beloved spouse. As for myself, my lot is to exhibit to the band of mourners the

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* See note, p. 24, vol. i. † See note *, p. 219, vol. i.
‡ See note, p. 174, vol. i.

robe of Husain, the king of religion; I shall lay it on my head, saying, "Husain, Husain!" and seek my Joseph in his coat of many colours.

Kulsúm.—O young 'Abbás my brother, O thou who wast killed with spears, O my brother! Alas! grief for thee overpowers me, O my brother. May thy sister die through sorrow on thy behalf!

Zainab.—O innocent king, my Husain! O prince without an army, my Husain! O desolate and homeless Husain! may thy sister die with sorrow!

Sukainah.—O brother who wast endowed with all perfections, O my brother handsome as Joseph, look upon my state; may thy sister die with grief on thy behalf!

The Bride of Kásim.—O my late spouse, Kásim!* O my fir-tree branch, Kásim! O my free cypress,† Kásim! may I die for thy sake! My walking cypress, Akbar! my disappointed brother, Akbar! O peace of my soul, Akbar! may thy sister die for thy sake!

Zain-ul-'Abid-dín.—Cease your mourning, ye destitute and afflicted creatures, for I am stunned by your wailing and screamings. Bear with patience the unfortunate loss of the thirsty martyrs. Groaning and wailing will do you no good.

The Inhabitants of Madínah (to Zain-ul-'Abid-dín).—Peace be unto thee, O chosen of God, O Sajjád,‡ the remnant of the deluge of Karbalá! How long wilt thou weep, O poor Imám? Thy lamentations have made us lose our patience and endurance.

Zain-ul-'Abid-dín.—How can I refrain myself from weeping, seeing I have lost the king of land and sea? I have been deprived of pearls and gems in the land of Karbalá. Jacob, having lost a single son, became blind through sorrowing for him; how can I forbear weeping, seeing a father as great as the world itself has been taken from me?

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* See Scene XVIII. † See note, p. 10, vol. i.

‡ See note †, p. 261.

The People of Madínah.—O thou who art lost in the abyss of affliction, grief, pain, and trouble, the truth lies on thy side. Mourn on for the death of the King of Karbalá; but there is one thing we request of thee, O dignified Imám, which is that thou shouldst kindly come to the mosque, and deliver us, with thy own gem-scattering tongue, an oration of thine own composition, that we may be profited by thy grace.

Imám 'Abid-dín.—Oh! how can I put my foot in the mosque for such a solemn act, seeing my father has lately been killed, and I have to shed tears for him? But since you are so importunate, I shall, for your sake, place myself on the top of the pulpit, however sad I may be.

The People of Madínah.—Though the world was filled with the tyrannical influence of the family of Abú Sufiyán,* yet, thanks be to God, truth has once again been established in its own central seat. O asylum and guide of all men, both old and young, deliver thy speech, that we may offer our souls for thy words.

Imám 'Abid-dín.—Oh! which of the magnified pains of Husain shall I declare unto you? Or which of his numerous sorrows shall I describe? By the Lord do I swear, I cannot dare to relate the thing with my tongue, nor can I show forth the exact sufferings of the martyrs with my words.

The People of Madínah.—Rehearse unto us, we pray thee, some of the trials of Husain; talk to us of the temptations Husain had in the plain of Karbalá.

Imám 'Abid-dín.—O friends, what shall I tell you about the battle of Karbalá? How can I say what happened to us there? O men and women, beat first on your heads and breasts ere I repeat what misfortunes befell my dear father. They killed Husain on Friday, making him roll in his own blood with thirsty lips. After that sad transaction they

* See note ‡, p. 208, vol. i., and note †, p. 203, vol. ii.

rushed atrociously on the family in the pavilion, tying the hands of the destitute ones, and hurting the hearts of the women and children.

The People of Madínah.—Alas! alas for what has happened in the desert of Karbalá, in a most cruel manner, to the destitute family of 'Alí!

A Certain Busy-body.—Know, O Yazíd, that I have just come from Madínah, from the threshold of the sanctuary of the matchless king. The praised of God, the lord of the worshippers, the son of Husain, has seated himself on the pulpit, claiming that he is the true Khalíf. Remedy the matter before the government shall have gone out of thy hand, and all the world become worshippers of 'Alí the chosen of the Prophet.

Yazíd.—Reason tells me to place my foot in the stirrup and start for Bat-há * with most cruel intentions: to gather again countless armies from Syria and Kúfah;† to cut off, with the sword of injustice, the very seed of the house of Muhammad; to make Zainab and Kulsúm pass again bare-headed and naked in the streets of the cities of Damascus. Well, thou art commanded, O Shimar, to go and destroy Madínah, and do with this family what seemeth best to thee.

Shimar.—I will go to Madínah, and do to it what shall never be forgotten until the Day of Resurrection. I shall give such a slap on the face to Sukainah that the impression of the blow shall ever remain on the page of succeeding generations. If God will carry me to the city of Madínah, I shall leave no trace of the family of His people.

Sukainah.—O malicious spheres, what have ye again in view? It appears you have got new ideas in your head; let the tyranny inflicted on us, the destitute, suffice. Woe unto us, from the apostate Shimar! Alas for Yazíd the tyrant!

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* See note †, p. 182, vol. i.

† See note, p. 9, vol. i.

Zainab.—Dear Sukainah, why dost thou commence mourning, and mentionest the names of Shimar and Yazíd?

Sukainah.—I saw in a dream that Shimar the accursed, like sudden death, arrived from his journey on purpose again to make us prisoners. He put a yoke and chain round our neck, and carried all of us, small and great, to Syria. I cannot tell what the dream can signify; it has indeed made me burn with fever since I have awakened.

Zainab.—May I, the afflicted, be a ransom for thy sad condition if, God forbid, such a thing shall happen again! Zainab must of necessity be a fellow-traveller with thee; I must also, a second time, become a destitute vagrant captive.

Sukainah.—No, aunt, I am not weeping because of my captivity, nor am I complaining and wailing owing to my being made a prisoner again. I am rather sorry because I dreamt that, whilst the Syrians ill-treated me, I could not descry thee anywhere among us.

Zainab.—Sukainah, dear niece, vex not thyself, but prepare thyself for captivity; the vision which thou hast dreamt last night, points to Zainab's death.

Shimar (*arriving*).—Beat the drum, O ye Syrians, most maliciously, and let the people know our arrival at Madínah. O armies of Damascus and Mussul,* enter ye all at once into the town, and raise a great disturbance in the city by the slaughter of the family of the Prophet with the edge of the sword.

Sukainah.—O Musalmans, I am quite overwhelmed on hearing the rough voice of Shimar the infidel. Trembling has fallen on me from dread of him; fear has made the very marrow of my bones burn.

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* Mawsil, generally known as Mussul, is the name of a town, and also of a district, on the confines of Mesopotamia and Babylonia, opposite to the spot where Nineveh is supposed to have stood.

Shimar.—I have, O 'Abid-dín, to take thy life, and drag thy feeble body on the ground. I have heard thou hast become a leader of mankind, and hast taken thy seat once more upon the pulpit. I have received orders to sever thy head from thy body, with the edge of this my dagger.

Imám Zain-ul-'Abid-dín.—Look upon me the invalid, O God, my Lord, in the hands of the wicked enemy.

Shimar.—O poor afflicted 'Abid, complain not of me to God; tell me, now, where is thy wretched miserable aunt, where is Zainab the sorrowful? I am commanded to make her pass bare-headed in the streets and markets.

Imám 'Abid.—My poor melancholy desolate aunt is continually beating on her head, mourning grievously for her brother. Let my aunt alone, thou accursed sceptic; do not hurt or trouble her maliciously; fear the result of her sighs.*

Shimar.—Thy sad entreaties cannot soften my heart. I must again carry thy aunt off. O Zainab the sorrowful, thou daughter of the Prince of Arabia, let it be known to thee that thou must be a captive, a prisoner, again.

Zainab.—Alas! the dream of Sukainah has its real fulfilment, the tree of misery bears its bitter fruit in the garden of malice. Shimar, the accursed wretch, is about again to maltreat me; once more must I become weary of my life.

Shimar.—O oppressed Zainab, thou sister of Husain, cease now from these doleful noises; tell me, where is Sukainah, the daughter of Husain? for Yazíd has particularly made mention of her, demanding me to seize her a second time.

Zainab.—Why shouldst thou inquire after Sukainah?

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* "The life-destroying arrows of a hundred archers
Are not so potent as the sighs of one old woman."
Wollaston's "Translation of the Anwár-i-Suhailí," p. 51, ed. 1877.

What dost thou want with the poor girl, now that thou hast cruelly killed her father?

Sukainah.—O Musalmans, my father's murderer is come! Mercy! Ye soldiers! What shall I do? my dreams are realised! How can I escape from this calamity? I do not know where to hide myself; grief has brought my soul to the tip of my lips.

Shimar.—Why dost thou run away, O girl? behold the blood of thy father still on this dagger. To-day I have numerous things against thee; I have many malicious designs in my heart.

Sukainah.—Dear aunt, let me grasp the skirt of thy garments and be sheltered, if possible, from the cruel enemy Shimar; my face has become in colour like the violet, from the slaps he has given on my cheeks. Deliver me, aunt, from the hands of this infidel. I cannot bear his tyranny any longer.

Zainab.—O horrid cruel tyrant, be ashamed before the Messenger of the two worlds. Do not buffet Sukainah so cruelly; beware of the consequences of her sighs. O irreligious man!

Shimar.—Cease thy shoutings and complaints, O afflicted wandering Zainab. Thou, O Sukainah, stop thine ado, show me where to find thy sister. I must carry her off, seeing the poor thing has not yet experienced any captivity.

Sukainah.—Give up this thy intention, thou perfidious wretch! My poor sister is not well, she is confined to bed, grievously suffering from illness; she is so troubled, that she is weary of life.

Shimar (*coming to the pillow of Fátimah*).—It is not possible that I should leave this broken-hearted invalid. I must now lead her away as a captive. Up, thou desolate invalid, from thy bed; heaven, the plotter, has contrived new plans for thee. Thou must set out with thy feverish body towards Syria; the time of suffering injury and cruelty is come for thee.

Fátimah.—Who art thou, O foul, impure wretch, by the

harshness of whose words the limbs of my body thus tremble? Methinks thou art Shimar, whose deeds are so tinged with blood. Yes, thou must be he, for thy voice has at once banished peace and quietness from my mind.

Shimar.—Yes, O poor oppressed creature, I am Shimar, who cut thy father's throat with this very dagger. Arise from thy place, thou sorrowful creature, and prepare thee to depart with dishevelled hair to Syria.

Fátimah.—O heaven, hast thou at last made me a prisoner in the hand of the wicked enemy, notwithstanding my sufferings from fever? O base Shimar, be somewhat mild to me, for God's sake, for I cannot bear hard treatment.

Sukainah.—O merciless, accursed Shimar, thou who hast not an atom of humanity in thee, can a body, so delicate that it is unable to bear the pressure of a rose-leaf, endure thy heavy chains? I am thy prisoner, thou treacherous Shimar, withhold thy cruel hand from this broken-hearted invalid.

Fátimah.—Nay, sister, thou hast been troubled enough in Karbalá already, it is now my turn to suffer affliction and contempt.

Sukainah.—O sister, when the almighty hand of God tempered me and formed me, it was with a design I should be made the prisoner of oppression. I must be led with shame and ignominy to Syria. I ought to be exposed to the public bare-headed, and not thou.

Fátimah.—O heaven, dost thou separate me at length from Sukainah, and leave me solitary and destitute here in Madínah? How long shall I again sit by the way-side, waiting for her return, which may or may not ever happen? O ye, my faithful and dear friends, forgive me with all your hearts in case I have done you any wrong. Come, sister, seeing it is the time of separation, let me kiss thine eyes, for I am afraid thou wilt not return. There is one desire, sister, left in my heart, which thou must consent to grant, O my dearly beloved.

Sukainah.—I am going from thee, bearing many scars on my heart. I carry thy grief with me from stage to stage. Well, sister, tell me what is thy desire or request, peradventure it may now be obtained.

Fátimah.—Sit down, dear sister, thou who art acquainted with sorrow, that I may see thy face; since I behold death always before me, it is necessary we should bid each other farewell once for all.

Shimar.—O ye oppressed ladies, abandon your weeping and crying, or take them with you and set out for Syria. I have received orders from Yazíd, O Zain-ul-'Abid-dín, to break thy head with a cudgel.

Zainab.—Do not beat 'Abid-dín with a stick, O tyrant, let thy blows fall on my head instead of his.

Kulsúm.—O infidel, do not strike on Zainab's head with a stick; deal thy blows rather on the head of Kulsúm the afflicted.

Sukainah.—O unjust one, do not strike Kulsúm my aunt with a stick; beat on my head rather, thou execrable atheist.

Shimar.—Depart to Syria, O ye band of prisoners; there is no more time to be lost, ye sad assembly.

Zainab.—O Shimar, for the sake of God and His Prophet, dismiss me, O ill-starred, impudent creature, that I may go to the sepulchre of Zahrah* my mother, and speak

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* "Moslem historians seem to delight in the obscurity which hangs over the lady's last resting-place, as if it were an honour even for the receptacle of her ashes to be concealed from the eyes of men. Some place her in the Haram, relying upon this tradition:—Fatimah, feeling about to die, rose up joyfully, performed the greater ablution, dressed herself in pure garments, spread a mat upon the floor of her house near the Prophet's Tomb, lay down fronting the Kiblah, placed her hand under her cheek, and said to her attendant, "I am pure and in a pure dress; now let no one uncover my body, but bury me where I lie!" When Ali returned he found his wife dead, and complied with her last wishes. Umar bin Abd el Aziz believed this tradition, when

to her of my griefs and pains, because it will not be possible in future for me to visit again her holy monument.

Shimar.—Scatter not starry tears from the clouds of thine eyes; go and visit the tomb of thy mother.

Zainab (at her mother's sepulchre).—O moon of the orbit of modesty, peace be on thee! look upon my tearful eyes. Arise, O mother, for a while from thine earthly bed in the grave, and see what I am suffering at the hand of Time. Art thou not aware of the condition of me, thy sorrowful

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he included the room in the Mosque; and generally in El Islam Fatimah is supposed to be buried in the Haram.

"Those who suppose the Prophet's daughter to be buried in El Bakia rely upon a saying of the Imam Hasan, "If men will not allow me to sleep beside my grandsire, place me in El Bakia, by my mother." They give the following account of his death and burial. His body was bathed and shrouded by Ali and Umar Salmah. Others say that Asma bint Umays, the wife of Abubekr, was present with Fatimah, who at her last hour complained of being carried out, as was the custom of those days, to burial like a man. Asma promised to make her a covered bier, like a bride's litter, of palm sticks, in shape like what she had seen in Abyssinia: whereupon Fatimah smiled for the first time after her father's death, and exacted from her a promise to allow no one entrance as long as her corpse was in the house. Ayisha, shortly afterwards knocking at the door, was refused admittance by Asma: the former complained of this to her father, and declared that her stepmother had been making a bride's litter, to carry out the corpse. Abubekr went to the door, and when informed by his wife that all was the result of Fatimah's orders, he returned home making no objection. The death of the Prophet's daughter was concealed by her own desire from high and low; she was buried at night, and none accompanied her bier, or prayed at her grave, except Ali and a few relatives. The Shiahs found a charge of irreverence and disrespect against Abubekr for absence on this occasion.

"The third place which claims Fatimah's honoured remains, is a small Mosque in El Bakia, south of the Sepulchre of Abbas. It was called Bayt el Huzn—House of Mourning—because here the Lady passed the end of her days, lamenting the loss of her father. Her tomb appears to have formerly been shown there. Now visitors pray, and pray only twice,—at the Haram, and in the Kubbat el Abbasiyah."—Burton's "El Medinah and Meccah," pp. 41, 42, vol. ii. ed. 1857.

daughter, how I am led away captive to Syria? Where is my former golden litter, O mother? and where is my brother gone? Let him now come and assist me into my litter. Where are 'Abbás and 'Alí Akbar, that they may endeavour to make me comfortable? Who, mother, ever saw a woman, except myself, twice led into captivity by the enemy? See how 'Abid, the lord of God's worshippers, is bound with chains and carried to Syria with tearful eyes, dear mother. Sukainah, the innocent daughter of Husain, is shedding tears and going with a scarred heart to Damascus, O mother.

Shimar.—Enough of this crying, O sister of Husain; set forth at once to Syria, by order of his majesty Yazíd.

Zainab.—Zainab is going to captivity, O friends, enveloped in black; behold her a poor homeless exile.

Imám 'Abid-dín.—Beat on your heads, O ye mourners,* for it is the beginning of sorrow; that Zainab should go into captivity is not a trivial matter. All people, once in a year, have a month for mourning,† but for us the whole year long is become a time of desolation.

Zainab.—Alas! I do not know why I have suddenly begun to feel very dull: my painful and melancholy heart is melting into blood! Tell me, O 'Abid-dín, for God's sake, what is this place called, and whither it leads? That view of the town which is there open to view, seems like the city of Makkah, or the land of Karbalá.

Imám 'Abid-dín.—This same dark-omened glimpse of the habitation which thou beholdest, is that of the ruined abode in Shám,‡ woe be to me! To-morrow the home of us destitute creatures shall be in Damascus, where the tyrants will lavish their cruelty on us.

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* See note †, p. 111, vol. i.

† An allusion to the observance, in Muhammadan countries, of the month of Muharram.

‡ Damascus.

Zainab.—The day of my death has arrived, O companions, and the end of my life is come. O dear friends, ask Shimar to let us lodge to-night in this place.

Imám 'Abid-dín.—O tyrannical, ill-visaged wretch! thus does Zainab send thee a message through me, saying, "Thou villainous fool, unmindful of God and religion, stay to-night in this place." She feels extremely ill; being in a very sad condition, she does nothing but weep.

Shimar.—O ye ugly and villainous Syrians, stop, for the sake of Zainab. Unburden your beasts in this noisy place. You may start to-morrow morning for Damascus.

Zainab.—O great God, I adjure thee, by the verity of Thy Prophet, and by the merit of the blood-stained head of 'Alí, the cup-bearer of Al Kauzar,* make it not my lot, O glorious Creator and Lord of All, to see with mine eyes again the unsightly face of Yazíd. Nay, bring rather the day of my life to a close, O God, for it is not expedient for me to live longer.

Kulsúm.—O sorrowing sufferer of the age, my oppressed sister, tell me why the colour of thy face is gone? Dust be on my head! What art thou expecting, that, like a person on the point of death, thou turnest thine eyes in different directions?

Zainab.—I am expecting that my brother will come from Karbalá, that I may cast my soul at the dust of his blessed feet. Forgive me, all you my friends; behold I am going from you with a reluctant mind. Come here, Sukainah, let me see thy beauty for awhile, for I shall carry with me to the grave the desire of being in thy society.

Sukainah.—O dear aunt, see how unlucky a creature I am, in that I have suffered three great losses: that of my father who was slain, which is the cause of my captivity; that of my mother, which has rendered me an object of

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* See note *, p. 96, vol. i.

scorn; and now that concerning which thou talkest. Oh! never, never so! For if I be removed from thy presence, and be deprived of the honour of kissing thy feet, no abode will befit me better than the grave. Yea, I will go now, dear aunt, and sit sorrowfully in ashes! O God, how hard it is to be fatherless! how burdensome to be despised by all!

Zainab.—O my fatherless and motherless girl, sit by me awhile and comfort me. The day of thine aunt's life is darkened; my death, dear niece, is at hand. I have nourished thee always in my lap, alike in Madínah as elsewhere. Now my day has drawn towards its evening, the sunbeam of my life can be seen on the roofs and house-tops. Thou knowest, dear niece, that I have no children left, and am dying, like a poor exile, in this solitary place. I beg thee, in place of my two children, to beat on thy head and breast, and weep over me. Let this be thy motto, aye, sob forth, "Alas my aunt Zainab! Alas my father Husain!"

Sukainah.—O God, is there a miserable one like me—a wretched creature, expatriated contemptuously from home? I bear in my heart the scar of my dear father's absence. I am destitute, helpless, and sore-distressed in soul! Should Zainab my aunt go from this perishable abode, the world, I must needs die also.

Zainab.—Sukainah, darling, do not weep so much, for I cannot bear to see thee doing so. Come to me, thou afflicted Kulsúm, for I have, dear sister, to enjoin thee something.

Kulsúm.—Here am I, my sorrowful sister; what is thy request, O thou crown of my head?

Zainab.—O sister of fair complexion, I have several things with which I intend to entrust thee, to be kept faithfully after I am gone.

Kulsúm.—Tell me what are those things—may I be a sacrifice for thee!—and deliver them to me, trusting I shall faithfully keep them, and that with great pleasure.

Zainab.—Take from me this casket full of gems, con-

taining the two sacred * teeth of the Prophet. Take also this little box, wherein is the blood-drenched turban of 'Alí, the cup-bearer of Al Kauzar. Take this flask from me with expression of sorrow, for it contains some pieces of Hasan's heart. Take also the dear shirt of Husain the martyr, and keep it with thee like thy dear life, for my mother must intercede on the Day of Judgment concerning the sins of mankind through the merit of these things.

Kulsúm.—On my eyes! whatever thou, my faithful friend, hast ordered me to do, I will, if death respite me, perform the same faithfully. I see thy colour is turned blue through thirst: here is some water, take it and nourish thy throat withal.

Zainab.—O sister, do not aggravate my pains by reminding me of my pale colour. Dost thou not know that on the day that Husain went to Paradise he was killed in agonies of thirst by the inhabitants of Kúfah. I must also, dear sister, go to Haidar † our father with parched lips. O companions of me, the sorrowful invalid, be kind enough to leave me alone for a time, for I intend to speak my mind to the Lord, and disclose my secrets to my Creator.

Kulsúm.—Alas, O heaven, how cruelly dost thou revolve! thou always layest some additional grief upon my heart. I have suffered sorrow for the death of six brothers ‡ of mine own; with what strength shall I bear the absence or separation of my dear sister? How can a single heart bear so many deadly scars? Pour patience on me, O Lord!

Zainab.—Alas! death stands before me, staring me in the face, while I am thinking over my past afflictions and

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* See note, p. 129, vol. i.

† See note, p. 39, vol. i.

‡ Their names were Hasan, Husain, 'Abdullah, 'Abbás, 'Usmán, and Ja'far.—See D'Herbelot; head "Ali."

captivity. O death, give me respite, that I may sing mournfully a funeral dirge for myself. Sit in a corner, Zainab, thou poor distressed creature, and ponder over the injuries thou hast received in thy lifetime. Fate dragged thee to Karbalá, where destiny laid on thy soul scars innumerable, poor Zainab! After the martyrdom of thy brother thou becamest a wretched captive, riding bare-headed on a camel, poor Zainab! When thou camest to the city of Kúfah, the women of that place pelted thee with stones from the walls and terraces, poor Zainab! Remember the time when the unprincipled son of Ziyád* ordered his servants to put thee to death, poor Zainab! Thou wast led away from Kúfah to Syria with the sound of drums and musical instruments, without any helper, friend, or acquaintance to pity thee or sympathise with thee, poor Zainab! A miscreant villain threw dust and ashes on thy head in a certain place, but thou didst only beat on thy head with the ejaculation of "O Lord, look upon me!" on thy tongue, poor Zainab! Where was the heroism of 'Abbás at that time to avenge thee on the wicked party, O poor Zainab? Ah, alas! the time when they presented thee in a most abject manner to Yazíd, the treacherous dog, in his court, poor Zainab! Thou sawest with thine own eyes how Yazíd† struck continually with a cane the lips which Muhammad, the chosen Prophet, used to kiss fondly, poor Zainab! How canst thou enter Damascus another time? Wish death for thyself this very moment, poor Zainab! Submit to die in this land of exile, and give up all hopes of seeing any good in this uncertain life, O Zainab! I go with an eager wish to see the face of the Messenger of God in heaven, saying meanwhile as a witness, "There is no God but the true God."

Kulsúm.—O friends, strength has quitted my heart, for my sister Zainab is gone from the world. Come, let me

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* See note *, p. 177, vol. i. † See Introduction, Scene XXX.

close thine eyes, sister, and stretch thy hands and feet in the direction of Makkah,* our Kiblah. O 'Abid-dín, remain not thou silent, but mourn, and come and dress † thine aunt with winding-sheets.

Imám 'Abid-dín.—Oh! whence, in this land of exile, can I get winding-sheets to bury the poor remains of my dear aunt? Come here, Sukainah, my afflicted sister; go and tell Shimar, in my name, saying, "My aunt is gone from this world after many trials; procure some spices and a shroud for my aunt."

Sukainah.—Know, O thou Shimar, that Zainab, whose lot was but sorrow in this world, has departed from this transitory life to Paradise. Have compassion on my tearful eyes, and furnish my poor aunt with some funeral spices and a shroud.

Shimar.—When Husain, the brother of Zainab, died, his body remained three days and nights exposed to view without any winding-sheet. He had no friend to carry away his remains, nor did any attempt to place him under the ground. Go and bury this miserable creature naked, or as she is. Zainab is not superior to, or dearer than, the thirsty-lipped Husain.

Sukainah.—Since thou dost not give my aunt a winding-sheet, nor hast thou any compassion on my blood-shedding eyes, tell me which is the road that goes to Najaf,‡ for thy cruelty has made me impatience itself.

Shimar.—Tell me, why dost thou inquire about the road to Najaf, for thy words have filled me with curiosity?

Sukainah.—I wish to go to Najaf and, with tears in my eyes, to inform 'Alí, the friend of God, about these things. I will say to him: O 'Alí, come out from thy burying-place in Najaf, thy daughter Zainab has died; get her funeral garments.

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* See note, p. 31, vol. i, and note, p. 168, vol. i.

† See note, p. 27, vol. i.

‡ See note, p. 241, vol. i.

Shimar.—O daughter of Husain, do not scream so loud. Zainab is not dearer to 'Alí than his son Husain, who was buried with his body cut into hundreds of pieces, yet his father did not do anything for *him.* Go! Zainab does not require winding-sheets.

Sukainah (*to 'Abid*).—Dear brother! Ah me! the sarcastic words of Shimar. By the Lord, the very marrow of one's bones gets inflamed by his bitter speeches. He says the body of a poor stranger does not want any spice nor a winding-sheet.

Imám 'Abid-dín.—Weep not, poor broken-hearted sister. I will wrap Zainab in my cloak, and have her buried. Alas, dear aunt! thou hast gone from this life, and escaped from many troubles, leaving me alone to suffer grief. Because thou didst long to see the dear face of young 'Alí Akbar thou hastenedst to Paradise to behold him. Wast thou thinking about those who died in Karbalá that thou didst go thirsty to the water-giver of heaven? Dear aunt, when thou shalt arrive at Paradise, and have the honour of being in Husain's presence, remember and give my respects to my honoured father. As soon as thou arrivest there in her presence, speak according to the best of thine abilities to Fátimah concerning our troubles and captivity.

SCENE XXXV.

CONVERSION OF A CHRISTIAN LADY TO THE MUHAMMADAN FAITH.

A YOUNG Christian lady arriving at the plain of Karbalá is much struck with the beauty of the scene, and orders the leader of the caravan to stop awhile that she may enjoy the sight. No sooner, however, does he drive his tent-pegs into the ground than blood issues forth from the holes thus made. Undismayed by this strange portent, the lady betakes herself to rest, and falling into a deep sleep learns in a dream the tale of the martyrdom of Husain and his family at this very plain of Karbalá, and is enjoined to abjure her own faith and become a follower of the Prophet. She awakes, but only to fall asleep a second time; again a vision appears, and she beholds the body of Husain return to earth to visit the scene of his murder. Meeting with the angels Michael and Gabriel, the latter announces to him the glad tidings that the Sole Creator had granted him four things in consideration of his having sacrificed his life on behalf of the followers of Muhammad. "1st. Whoever prays under the dome of thy shrine his prayer shall be heard; 2nd. All true Imáms of religion shall be of thy seed; 3rd. The earth of the land where thou art buried shall be a cure for all diseases; 4th. Whoever visits thy sepulchre shall live a double life." The Prophet of Arabia himself then appears and announces that Husain's mediation had been accepted by the Lord of Heaven. The young lady awakes, and, distracted in mind and unsettled in purpose, wanders over the plain. There she beholds the mutilated corpses of the martyred family. Amongst others she meets with the spirit of Fátimah, and ascertaining that the unexpected apparition is none other than the Prophet's daughter, she falls at the feet of the "best among women," and declares herself a believer in the unity of God and in the mission of Muhammad and 'Alí as Prophets of the Lord.

A Christian Young Lady.—What a well-watered plain and beautiful landscape is this, O companions! the whole air seems to be pregnant with odours and scents. It cheers the heart, and nourishes the soul with its fragrance and aromatic odour. I cannot tell whether it is the Garden of Paradise, or merely the bázár of perfume-sellers. If I call it the place of Moses the son of 'Imrán,* I may not be right; so, likewise, I may perhaps err if I say the Spirit of God is hidden in this land.

The Lady's Maid.—May I be a ransom for thee, O fair-faced lady! may I perish for thy sweet name, to prove my faithfulness and attachment! I wonder what place or locality is this, for there ascends from its soil such a nice perfume of roses! I have but one request to thee, O my sweet-faced mistress, which is (if thou thinkest it proper) that we all may alight in this territory for a time, and rest somewhat from the fatigue of our journey.

The Young Lady.—I adjure thee, O happy and auspicious maid, by the truth of Christ the Prophet, go without delay to the leader of this caravan, and induce him to come to me.

The Maid (to the Leader of the Caravan).—The intent of my addressing a charming young man like thee, is, that my lady has sent me to thee. Wilt thou be so kind as to accompany me to her?

The Leader (coming to the Lady).—Peace be unto thee, O most fortunate lady, thou chief of all beauties, thou moon† of the sphere of glory! Declare unto me, O majestic damsel, what is the reason that I have had the honour of being summoned to thy presence?

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* "*Imrán*, or *Amrán*, is the name of two several persons, according to the *Mohammedan* tradition. One was the father of Moses and Aaron, and the other was the father of the Virgin *Mary;* but he is called by some *Christian* writers *Joachim.*"—Sale's "Koran," chap. iii. p. 38, ed. 1734.

† See note, p. 7, vol. i.

The Young Lady.—I called thee, O leader of the caravan, to ask thee what this land was called, even this territory, which is invigorating to the spirit, like Paradise, and the very view of which brings the smell of musk to our olefactory senses.

The Leader of the Caravan.—Know thou, O good-principled lady, that this land, which vies with the lofty Paradise—this spot which invigorates the soul and refreshes the mind—generally goes by the name of Karbalá.

The Young Lady.—Order instantly that the animals be disburdened, and that the whole caravan alight in this pleasant plain. I intend to pass a few days in this spot, that our minds may be relieved from the dulness occasioned by the tediousness of the journey.

The Leader of the Caravan.—Very well, I shall most willingly obey thy orders, since thy commands are obligatory upon all mankind. Alight, O ye people, in this plot of ground, and rest awhile from your fatiguing journey. Run, O faithful servants; pitch the tents and pavilions instantly.

The Young Lady (talking to herself).—Oh, what a wonderful climate this land has got! what a pleasant sight do I behold! what a beautiful landscape! In whatever direction I look, or wherever I turn my eyes, the very dust of the place appears to sing wonderful praises to the Deity! I am amazed in myself, not knowing what sort of spot this can be; my fate must have drawn me to a marvellous locality.

The Leader of the Caravan.—What is the secret of this wonderful phenomenon, O Lord God? I observe streams of blood running in different directions. I do not know whether I am dreaming, or in reality do see this strange marvel. At any rate, the mysterious things I behold must have some secret at the bottom.

The Maid (to the Leader of the Caravan).—Come, let us hasten now to my lady, that queen of the sphere of glory, and inform her of the wonderful event, crying, moaning, and

heaving sighs from the heart while communicating our message.

The Leader of the Caravan.—Know, O thou heaven-like lady, that we are in much distress and sorrow. A wonderful calamity, like which no human being has seen nor heard, must have taken place in the world; for where we begin to drive in the pegs in order to set up our tents, there gushes forth a stream of blood of an intensely red colour, which fills the air with its exhaling scent of musk and ambergris.

The Young Lady.—These thy words have kindled a fire in my heart, and made the whole surface of the universe dark in my sight. Walk before me, that I may at once follow thee, and observe the phenomenon with my own eyes. None can remember to have ever heard of such a strange occurrence under the nine pillarless indigo-coloured spheres.

The Leader hammers a peg in the ground, whence blood instantly springs up.—Come and observe, O handsome lady, how blood bubbles up at the foot of this slope. If thou, O virtuous lady, thinkest it advisable, let us at once leave this bewitched, ill-starred ground, for the great sign which we behold in this wilderness may be a token of affliction and grief peculiar to this land. I fear that if we continue to remain in this place the jealous spheres will, by some accident or other, maliciously hurt thy feelings.

The Young Lady.—I am sure, O amiable youth, that all thy advice arises from fidelity and good intent! but it will do no harm if, by way of trial, we lodge but one night in this plain of affliction. In the morning, as soon as the sun rises, we shall at once leave this dismal, grief-stirring place.

The Leader of the Caravan.—We are willing the few drops of blood we possess should be shed at the dust of thy feet, and have no objection to anything thy ladyship may think proper. Better sleep awhile in this field, O happy lady, that thou mayest forget the fatigue of the road for some minutes.

The Young Lady (*to the Maid*).—Come, O maid, I adjure thee that thou fetch me a pillow without delay (for my soul is going to burn; yea, the very marrow of my bones is about to be consumed in this land of trial) that I may repose a moment; peradventure I may be relieved from the sorrow of the age for a while.

The Maid (*to the Lady*).—Come, O beautiful mistress, may I be offered in alms for the safety of thy pretty head! sleep on in this bed with perfect tranquillity. I hope thy shadow will not for a minute be removed from us in this wilderness.

The Christian Young Lady, praying, retires to rest.—O great Lord, I adjure Thee by the truth of eternity, by Thy world-illuminating, atom-cherishing sun, by the truth of the Lord Jesus and the Prophet Moses, and by the veracity of Joseph, Jacob, and Zacharias,* reveal to me, O gracious and merciful Lord, the circumstances appertaining to this terrible and mysterious wilderness.

The Young Lady (*to Jesus*).—Who art thou, O thou whose face shines like the moon? for I see the light of prophecy visible in thy countenance. I adjure thee by the Omnipotent Judge, O thou that bringest me good tidings of Paradise, declare unto me who are this Fátimah and her crowned father, and what is the reason of her coming to this place?

Jesus.—Know thou that my name is Jesus Christ the Apostle of God in heaven and earth, and I have come as a pilgrim to this land, with tearful eyes, to visit the sepulchre of the son of the cup-bearer of Al Kauzar.† I will declare unto thee who is this Fátimah, by whose hands thou must become a Musulman. She is that lady whose noble father is called the Prophet of both worlds. Her

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* For the story of Zacharias, see Sale's "Koran," chap. iii. p. 39 *et seq.* ed. 1734.

† See note *, p. 96, vol. i.

husband is the famous 'Alí the elect, who is appointed by God guardian over all the creatures of the world. She, even Fátimah, the best among all women,* will quickly arrive in this land of trial to weep and mourn over her son Husain.

The Young Lady (*awaking*).—I wonder what dream was this which I, poor sorrowful creature that I am, have dreamt, and the excessive joy of which has awakened me from my sleep! Oh! what good tidings are these which are brought me in this land? good news indeed, no less than that I have to inherit Paradise.

The Maid.—May I be a ransom for thy soul, O heaven-dignified lady! Why didst thou awake untimely from thy refreshing sleep?

The Young Lady.—Know, O maid, that as soon as I fell asleep in this land of trial, I saw our Lord Jesus, having his head and feet bare, like those who mourn for the dead. He came unto me, ordering me to embrace the holy religion of Muhammad, and promising me, as a reward, the enjoyment of eternal life in heaven.

The Maid.—Come, O pious mistress, let me revolve around thee. I beg thee to cheer up thy heart, and think no more of grief or sorrow, but sleep a little more; peradventure thou mayest be freed from all manner of painful thoughts.

The Young Lady.—Know, O maid, that I feel like one deprived of her senses; but I see thy advice is deserving of respect. I pray thee, good damsel, sit at my pillow and watch me while I sleep, for I feel, I cannot say why, very dull and sad, and have some curious presentiment that something is about to happen.

Michael,† the angel (*to Gabriel*).—O prime minister of the court of the glorious Creator, O my brother Gabriel, there has come an order from the Lord of heaven and earth that

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* See note *, p. 42, vol. i.

† See Sale's "Koran," chap. ii. p. 13, ed. 1734, and see note, p. 15, vol. i.

both of us should go down to Karbalá, and after our descent there, we should, by His divine order, try to console Husain the martyr.

Gabriel.—O my poor brother Michael, would to God that Gabriel had not been alive in the world! How can I bear to see the body which I caressingly brought up in my arms, and for which I sang lullabies to make it sleep? It is now cut to pieces, and thrown on the ground with contempt and scorn.

Michael.—O my brother, the very equal of my soul and heart, these thy words consume me from head to foot. Arise now in obedience to the order of the Omnipotent Judge, that we may, with tearful eyes, go and visit our lord, Imám Husain. Then we may both set up lamentations as we like.

Gabriel and Michael (*to the body of Husain*).—O Husain, thou whose head is dissevered from the body, peace be unto thee! O martyr of the temple of faith, peace be on thee!

The Body.—O my brothers and friends, on you be peace! Welcome, my dear companions, I wish you joy and happiness. It is strange that you should remember a headless person like me, and be mindful of your poor Husain.

Gabriel.—May I be a ransom for thy body, cut into many pieces! May I be a sacrifice for this thy symmetrical stature. Dust be on my head! how well as a servant have I attended on my Lord! Oh! why should I neglect to serve thee as I ought?

The Body.—Tell me, what is the message of the wise Creator, and how has he ordered thee to comfort the heart of Husain, the thirsty-souled* martyr? Is my Lord pleased with me, or not? Is my martyrdom accepted in his court, or not?

Gabriel.—May I be a sacrifice for thy throat that was unjustly cut! God, the glorious Lord, has sent thee a message, saying, "O oppressed Husain, I am thy shield

* See note, p. 14, vol. i.

and buckler. I am a witness that thou hast fulfilled thy promise and made good thy word. The sole Creator has granted thee four things in return. First, whoever prays under the dome of thy shrine, his prayer shall be heard. Second, all true Imáms of religion shall be of thy seed. Third, the earth of the land where thou art buried shall be a cure for all diseases. Fourth, whoever visits thy sepulchre shall live a double life."

The Body of Husain.—Gabriel, dear brother, I am glad to hear that our Lord has granted me four things. Say in return, O messenger of God, say as follows :—" O mighty Creator of all things, Husain has a regard for the salvation of souls. He sheds tears for the misery of his grandfather's followers; I am willing my head should be cut off a thousand times more with daggers, if it be that the Lord of heaven and earth will graciously pardon the sins of Muhammad's followers in the Day of Judgment."

Gabriel.—Be not troubled, O ornament of God's lofty throne, on account of the sinfulness of the Prophet's people, on that day, for the God of men and jinns * will certainly forgive the sins of Muhammad's followers for the sake of thy meritorious offering.

The Body of Husain.—Tell me, O messenger of the Divine Maker, where is my noble grandfather Muhammad, the intercessor of the Day of Judgment? where is my excellent father 'Alí, the Imám of the age? where is Hasan my brother, the rose-garden of faith?

Gabriel.—May the soul of thy cradle-mover, Gabriel, be an offering for thy head! May I be a sacrifice for this thy body thus rolling in dust and gore! Be not grieved, thy grandfather Muhammad the elect will soon, with thy noble father 'Alí, come here to see thee.

Michael.—Be it known unto all, both small and great, that Ahmad,† the elect of God, is arriving at Karbalá, and

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* See note, p. 24, vol. i.

† See note *, p. 37, vol. i.

with him 'Alí and Imám Hasan, all dressed in mourning apparel. They are coming with sobs, sighs, lamentation, and weeping, to visit the mutilated body of Husain their beloved.

The Body of Husain (to the Prophet and his companions).—O Prophet, thou moon of the constellation of dignity, peace be on thee! thou perpetual denizen of heaven, peace be on thee! O father, how didst thou come to remember me? O rose of the garden of religion, peace be on thee! O brother, may I be a sacrifice for thy soul! worthy art thou of praise and admiration, peace be on thee!

The Prophet.—O Husain, thou martyr for the people of God, on thee be peace! Thou who wast slain in the quarter of faith, on thee be peace! Where is thy head gone? may I be a sacrifice for thy sacred blood-stained body! What tyrannical, irreligious apostate unbeliever has maliciously severed thy head from the body with a dagger?

The Body of Husain.—O my acceptable grandfather, may I be a ransom for thee! may Husain's poor soul be made an offering for thy head! How strange in thee to remember thy servant, stranger still that thou shouldst come to Karbalá. Behold what thy sinful people have done to me, how they have cruelly put my head on the top of a spear.*

The Prophet.—Be not sorry, thou light of my tearful eyes; be not sorry, my dear thirsty-souled Husain, for it has pleased the glorious Creator to forgive the sins of the Prophet's followers, for the merit of thy blood which has been shed.

'Alí.—May I be a ransom for thy throat that is thus unjustly cut! May I be a sacrifice for this thy stature immersed in blood! At the time of thy death, who was

* "On passing through each town, the head of Hosein was displayed on the point of a lance."—Herklots' "Qanoon-e-islam," p. 168, ed. 1832.

burning like a candle at thy pillow? who spoke soothing words to thee in that hour, my child?

The Body.—When I fell from my saddle to the ground, I looked on my right hand and on my left, there was nothing to be seen except arrows and lances at my pillow, and there was nought but the edge of a sharp sword to soothe or console me. I made many supplications to Shimar, that ill-starred* accursed wretch, begging him to pour a few drops of water down my poor throat, but that wicked villain refused, and answered that I must drink water from the edge of the sword.

Hasan.—Alas, dear brother, may I the afflicted be a ransom for thee! Come, let me revolve around thee, O thirsty-souled Husain. Why has thy delicate body, O nightingale of the garden of light, been riddled with wounds like a wasp's nest.

The Body.—I am glad to find thee by my side, O light of my blood-shedding eyes. Thou art welcome indeed, my poor afflicted brother. Alas, thou wast not in the plain of Karbalá to see how the careless cruel people led all my family into captivity to Syriá! Well, brother, tell me, where is my mother, that best among women, is she not aware of the condition of Husain her son? O dear Hasan, I pray thee inform my respected mother in my own humble words, saying: "Mother, come out for a while from Paradise, and see how the body nourished up day and night in thy sacred arms, whose hair thou didst use to comb caressingly with thy eye-lashes, is now rolling in its own blood by the tyranny of the inhabitants of Kúfah."†

Hasan.—May I be a ransom for thy soul, O Imám Husain! do not so much lament and sigh to my great vexation. Thy mother, O sore-hearted nightingale, will soon come and see thee with tearful eyes.

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* See note, p. 43, vol. i.

† See note, p. 9, vol. i.

The Young Christian Lady (*awaking*).—I do not know what has taken place in this field of battle, that cry after cry continues to reach my ears! Yea, I hear mournful voices and sad noises, which well-nigh turn me into a flute. I do not know in whose chalice the cup-bearer of fate has malignantly poured wine mingled with poison. Has Jesus Christ, the Spirit of God, gone from the world, that I may say it is Mary His mother who thus laments for Him? Accompany me, O my companions, to the spot whence the doleful cry comes, that I may know who is the author of this bitter lamentation? or whose rose of life has faded away through the effect of the autumnal wind of death? how long must I conceal in my heart the painful sorrow caused by this noise?

The Maid.—O my virtuous mistress, what made thee start from thy sweet sleep in this distracted manner? Every now and then there happens something new to make thee restless in this land, and ever since thou hast come to this place I have seen thee weeping and heaving sighs. March out from this spot for an hour, that thou mayest amuse thyself a little; peradventure these painful sorrows may leave thy heart shouldst thou change thine abode.

The Young Lady.—O maid, what kind of a land is this, where the axe of injustice being laid at the base or foundation of one's happiness, pulls down the edifice in this sad manner? I fear the tyrannical spheres will maliciously blow me away in this dangerous land. I forget all the pleasures and joys of this world by reason of the abundance of sorrow which now fills my heart. The oftener I try to drive away grief from my distressed mind, the more frequently I find new troubles come and congratulate me.

The Maid.—Oh, may the soul of this miserable creature be an offering for thy safety! Pour not tears of grief so copiously down thy cheeks. Come, let us walk off together and see the fields, that thou mayest be diverted with the pleasurable sight of the tulips, roses, and hyacinths. The view of the beautiful plain will relieve thee from all sorts

of dulness. I am sure thou wilt forget thy grief in this way.

The Young Lady.—O maid, I feel so sad and melancholy in my mind, that the tongue cannot describe it. I swear, by our Lord Jesus and our Lady Mary, that the sorrow which is settled in my heart cannot be removed by the sight of any beautiful field or plain.

The Maid.—I adjure thee, by the Spirit of Christ the Prophet, not to say such things, O thou fair creature and lovely to behold. Come, let us set out for a while and have a good walk in these country fields. Thou shalt certainly be amused with the sight of the hyacinth and the roses, of which there are so many in this plain, that thou shalt entirely forget what dulness of spirits means.

The Lady (walking out with her maid).—O maid, the further I walk in this wilderness the greater does my sorrow become. Every step brings a new grief with it, and loads of sorrow are heaping themselves one upon another in my heart. I swear by the Virgin Mary that my sadness is increased, for I smell the scent of blood in this desert.

The Maid.—May I be a ransom for thee, O handsome mistress! I see the land covered with all sorts of flowers. Oh, what beautiful rose-coloured tulips are in this land! what nice fields and meadows! what hyacinth beds!

The Young Lady.—It is indeed a wonderful land, a strange tulip-field and rose-garden. I see many slain there plunged in blood. It was not strange that I felt so dull, that I talked of pain and affliction to such a degree. It was not without cause that I was so melancholy and sad in that dark night. I cannot tell to what nations these martyrs belong, or by whose fire of tyranny they were thus pitilessly slain.

The Maid.—Rest quiet for a time, O my fair-faced lady, and shed not now tears of affliction from thy moist eyes. Come and behold these poor slain creatures, how their bodies shine like the full moon. There is no doubt these martyrs

belong to some great family, or are they all of them of the posterity of 'Alí?

The Lady (*drawing near to the body of 'Abbás**).—May I be a ransom for thee, O thou poor creature! May I the wretch be a sacrifice for thy dear precious soul! O elect of the Creator, why have they cut off thy hands from thy body in this contemptuous manner? why is there not a hair's-breadth of soundness in all the members of thy elegant body?

The Maid.—For God's sake, arise from thy place, O mistress, and mourn no more; thou hast cried, moaned, and shrieked enough, arise now and bestir thyself.

The Lady (*coming to the body of Kásim*†).—Oh, I cannot say who is this beheaded youth, and why is the palm of his hand so nicely painted ‡ with henna. May I be made an offering for thee, O cypress§ of the orchard of bashfulness! Why is thy palm tree thus hewn down? I am sure thou hast newly been made a bridegroom, but the jealous spheres have not suffered thee to rejoice long with thy bride.

The Maid.—I adjure thee, by the Virgin Mary, not to make such doleful sounds, for I am overpowered by the noise of thy weeping and lamentation.

The Lady (*to the body of 'Alí Asghar*).—Many thanks be unto God for this His unexpected favour, for He has graciously given me the desire of my heart. Hitherto I have had no child, and it has pleased the Almighty to bestow on me such a precious little darling. Open thy mouth to receive the apple of my breast, and rest like a dear soul in my lap, thou pretty thing. Come, O maid, see how this poor little suckling has, instead of milk, received the point of an arrow in his throat. I adjure thee, O great God,

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* See Scene XIX.

† See Scene XVIII.

‡ See note ‡, p. 118, vol. i.

§ See note, p. 10, vol. i.

by Jesus to reveal unto me the miserable story of these slain bodies.

Gabriel.—Prepare ye the way, prepare ye the way! Fátimah, the daughter of God's Messenger, is coming. Prepare ye the way, prepare ye the way! for with her comes Khadíjah* her mother. Prepare ye the way, prepare ye the way! for here comes the Virgin Mary, Ásiyah,† Pharaoh's wife, and Eve ‡ too, the wife of Adam. Be at your posts, for Zahrah § is coming forth to visit her child. Shut your eyes, all ye men and jinns, for Husain's mother is coming from Paradise.

Fátimah.—O my lost child Husain, my child, my child! O my curved tree, my son, my son! (*Addressing the Lady.*) O sweet, eloquent lady, put the poor slain suckling in my hand; put this tongue-tied nightingale, this newly-grown tender plant, in my lap. Give me this rose of the flower-garden of Husain, the monarch of both worlds, the rejoicer of my heart and soul.

The Christian Young Lady.—Tell me, O respected lady, why thou art weeping with both eyes; why seemest thou thus distracted like thy dishevelled hair? What is the reason, O solar orb of the eastern horizon of hope, that thou wishest me to give thee this little martyr? By the

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* The first wife of Muhammad the Prophet.

† "The wife of Pharaoh, viz. Asia, the daughter of Mozáhem. The commentators relate, that because she believed in Moses, her husband cruelly tormented her, fastening her hands and feet to four stakes, and laying a large millstone on her breast, her face at the same time being exposed to the scorching beams of the sun. These pains, however, were alleviated by the angels shading her with their wings, and the view of the mansion prepared for her in Paradise, which was exhibited to her. . . . At length God received her soul, or, as some say, she was taken up alive into Paradise, where she eats and drinks."—Sale's "Koran," chap. lxvii. p. 458. ed. 1734. She was one of the four whom the Prophet declared the best of the women of Paradise.

‡ See Sale's "Koran," chap. ii. p. 4, ed. 1734.

§ See note, p. 22, vol. i.

truth of Jesus and Mary, I swear I will not make over to thee this poor oppressed infant unless thou first relate unto me the names and the circumstances of these unhappy slain persons.

Fátimah.—Know thou that this poor wounded infant, who looks, as it were, feathered with arrows, is the blossom of the meadow of my son Husain, the light of mine eyes. He is called Asghar. All these martyrs whom thou see'st thus cruelly beheaded are cypress trees belonging to the florid meadow of 'Alí, they are all immersed in blood through the tyranny of heaven.

The Christian Young Lady.—Thy speech, O lady, has quite upset me, my heart has lost all patience, peace, and tranquillity. Who art thou, that thy sighs* have such a potent influence?

Fátimah.—Know thou that I am the daughter of God's Messenger, my name being Fátimah, the mother of the king of the martyrs. I am the well-beloved offspring of the glorious Prophet. I am she whose Husain is maliciously beheaded. The glorious Lord Himself has described my father's position and dignity in the pages of the Gospel. I am she by whose father prophecy† has been sealed, and my beloved son, the light of mine eyes, has rolled in blood and dust.

The Christian Young Lady.—May I be a ransom for thy soul, O laudable virtuous lady! Come, let me kiss thy hands and feet, Madam; last night, in a vision, I was warned that we all must become Musulmans in this very place, and that I must embrace the holy religion of Muhammad. I adjure thee, then, by the spirit of thy noble father, to do to me what the religion of thy father teaches thee.

Fátimah.—Say, I am a witness that there is no God

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* See note, p. 274.

† See note ‡, p. 40, vol. i.

except the true God, that Muhammad is the Messenger of God unto all creatures, and that after Muhammad the elect of God, Haidar * the warrior is the immediate successor of that heaven-dignified Prophet.

The Young Lady.—Be a witness, O God, that I worship Thee, O King, and confess and witness that there is no God except the true God; that after Muhammad the elect, Haidar the warrior is Imám and successor of the Prophet. Come, O my maiden, take me kindly to the caravan.

Fátimah.—Every place in this plain looks like a garden of tulips; the whole surface has become, as it were, a field of violets, through the blood of the youths killed in it, but among all the martyrs my Husain alone is not to be seen, wherever I look for him. Oh! where is Husain, the light of mine eyes, that I do not behold him? He is not visible to the eye of me, poor sorrowful matron that I am. O son of 'Alí the elect, where art thou? lift up thy voice, my dear son, O may I be a sacrifice for thy sweet voice!

The Body of Husain.—Dear mother, may I be a sacrifice for thy soul! why dost thou weep? why art thou so sad and melancholy, beloved mother? Why art thou standing perplexed in this wilderness? If thou inquirest after Husain, come here.

Fátimah.—O thou who wast slain with the sword of injustice, on thee be peace! thou light of the eyes of the best among women, on thee be peace! Oh! how can Zahrah bear to behold thee thus a martyr? May I be a ransom for thy throat thus unjustly cut, may I be a sacrifice for thy body worn out by affliction! I wonder why the heavens were not destroyed at the time thou wast killed, why the foundation of the universe was not subverted.

The Body of Husain.—O mother, I am glad thou art come; may the sacred body of thy dear Husain be a sacrifice for every step of thine! It is strange thou hast been

* See note, p. 39, vol. i.

mindful of me thy beheaded son, and hast remembered thy destitute Husain. See how my frame is cut to pieces, how the body which thou didst day and night cherish and caress in thy arms, without separating it a minute from thy bosom, is now rolling in its blood.

Fátimah.—O Husain, may I be a ransom for thee and thy rosy cheeks! Come, let me kiss thy deadly wounds. Where is thy head, that I may be a sacrifice for it? Oh, let me be a ransom for thy throat thus unjustly cut! Tell me, in whose lap was thy dear head when Shimar drew out his poisoned dagger and made it cross thy throat?

Husain's Body.—Except the wicked Shimar himself, there was none at my head at the time, and I moistened my throat with the edge of the sword instead of with water: my sister Zainab came out from the tent beating severely on her breast, and saying, "Give me time that I may first close my brother's eyes with my own hand"; but the ill-starred Shimar would not allow it, and maliciously cut off my head with his dagger.

Fátimah.—Where now is Zainab, or the light of my eye Kulsúm? Where is my little girl, Sukainah the oppressed? where is Fátimah the broken-hearted bride, or Zain-ul-'Abid-dín,* the helpless invalid boy?

The Body of Husain.—They led all my family into captivity, making them ride bare-headed on camels; they cruelly tied up the hands of poor 'Abid, and hurt thereby my feelings a second time.

Fátimah.—Be not sorry, O light of my tearful eyes, for I shall appear before the Lord in the Day of Judgment, bearing in my hand the pearly tooth† of Ahmad the elect; on my head the blood-stained turban of Haidar the warrior, and with both hands holding the mutilated corpse of thy brother. Bearing thy blood-stained pretty shirt on my

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* See note †, p. 96, vol. i.

† See note, p. 129, vol. i.

shoulder, I shall lay hold on the foot of the throne of Divine Majesty, and ask Him to give thee many rewards.

The Body of Husain.—I am willing to offer my head even a thousand times over for the salvation of sinful people, provided the God of men and jinns graciously forgives, on the Day of Judgment, the sins of my grandfather's followers.

SCENE XXXVI.

CONVERSION OF KING CANIAH.

THIS Scene opens with an account of the proceedings of some devout Musulmans, who put on black garments and mortify themselves in various ways during the month of Muharram, in commemoration of the death of Husain at Karbalá. The band of mourners happen to be subjects of a certain king, who, holding the Christian faith, does not in any way sympathise with the conduct of the Muhammadan band of devotees. He accordingly orders them to be scourged and the men of the party beheaded. The minister, however, intercedes in their behalf, and the king thereupon consents to spare their lives, but at the same time sends them all to prison, bidding them seek the aid of the lord for whom they mourn. Touched with their cries of distress, the spirit of the deceased Husain, accompanied by his mother Fátimah, appears to the captives in the dungeon. Bidding them be of good cheer, the martyr of Karbalá summons some angels from the infernal regions, and directs them to torment the impious monarch who dared to ill-treat the worshippers of the true faith. The king, after enduring for a while the tortures of the angelic host, implores for mercy, and begs the forgiveness of the offended Husain. The pardon is granted upon the invariable condition amongst Muhammadans, that he should abjure his faith and adopt the religion of the Prophet. Emerging from what is designated in the text as the "mire of ignorance," the king "is saved and delivered from idolatry and Christian superstition." He then releases the captives, with profuse apologies for the treatment they had undergone at his hands, and the devotees render thanks to God that their "prayers were not offered to the throne of mercy for nought," seeing that the King of Karbalá had taken notice of their sad case and miserable condition.

A Leading Musulman.—Dearly beloved friends, Muharram,* the appointed month for mourning, is come. You must be dressed in black to indicate your sad state of mind. You ought to call your companions to places for lamentation, and make therein a melancholy noise in the commemoration of the death of Husain, the King of Karbalá. You should always remember his sad end, and shed tears of affection for him, persuading at the same time other people to do the same.

The Mourners.—O ye followers of 'Alí, lament for Husain, his beloved son, for ye must know at the same time, dearly beloved, that this is the month of affliction and sorrow. Dear friends, since Husain died, thirsting, for the sake of you, his people, it is but just that you should, in return, thirst more after him, and weep on his behalf.†

The Musulman's Wife.—O man, if thou indeed expectest that Muhammad the chosen of God should make intercession for thee in the Day of Judgment, hasten to commemorate the death of Husain his grandson. Go, therefore, with haste, O happiest man, and get us some of those who can sing out this mournful event well, that we may remember young 'Alí Akbar, the lovely son of Husain,

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* See note †, p. 74, vol. i.

† Mrs. Meer Hassan Ali, in her "Observations on the Mussulmauns of India," vol. i. p. 23, ed. 1832, says as follows:—"In remembrance of this privation of the sufferers at Kraabaallah, every good Mussulmaun, at Mahurrum, distributes sherbet in abundance to all persons who choose to accept this their favourite beverage (sugar and water, with a little rose-water, or kurah, to flavour it), and some charitable females expend large sums in milk, to be distributed in the public streets; for these purposes there are neat little huts of sirrakee (a reed, or grass, resembling bright straw) erected by the road-side of the Mussulmaun's houses; they are called saabeels, where the red earthern cups of milk, sherbet, or pure water are seen ranged in rows, for all who choose to call for drink."

and weep for him; and that, thinking over the piteous state of his helpless family, we may beat our heads.

The Musulman.—O dear wife, go on bewailing and sorrowing for Husain's sake; cease not to shed heartfelt tears, thereby you may affect others. Let a house of mourning be put in order for Husain. Burn incense in censors, and fill the bottles with rose-water. Come, wife, take a large basin full of water, and put it in the corner of the court-yard in remembrance that Husain died with parched lips. Let the platform for the singers be covered with black cloth, and sigh on, thou, sadly. Let all those who hear thee groan cry and lament piteously.

The Mourners.—O thou royal pillar of religious truth, how stately thy house of mourning looks!

The Musulman.—O that I could be offered a sacrifice to the tomb* where thou restest, and to thy beautiful hall in Karbalá!

The Wife of the Musulman.—May my soul be a ransom for thy head, which was cut off cruelly from the body!

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* "The Mosque El Hasanayn (the 'two Hasans') is supposed to contain only the head of El *Husayn*, which, when the Crusaders took Ascalon, was brought from thence by Sultan Salih or Beybars, and conveyed to Cairo. As I have said before, the Persians in Egypt openly show their contempt of this tradition.

"It must be remembered that El Hasan died poisoned at El Medinah by his wife Jaadah. El Husayn, on the other hand, was slain and decapitated at Kerbela. According to the Shiahs, Zayn el Abidin obtained from Yezid, after a space of forty days, his father's head, and carried it back to Kerbela, for which reason the event is known to the Persians as 'Chilleyeh sar o tan,' the 'forty days of (separation between) the head and trunk.' They vehemently deny that the body lies at Kerbela, and the head at Cairo.

"Others, again, declare that El Husayn's head was sent by Yezid to Amir bin el As, the governor of El Medinah, and was by him buried near Fatimah's Tomb. Nor are they wanting who declare, that after Yezid's death the head was found in his treasury, and was shrouded and buried at Damascus. Such is the uncertainty which hangs over the early history of El Islam."—Burton's "El Medinah and Meccah," vol. ii. p. 40, ed. 1857.

The Wife of one of the Mourners.—May I be offered for the soul of Zainab thy afflicted sister!

The Musulman.—My lord Husain, I am this very day covering thy pulpit with black!

A Mourner.—Thy miserable sister has put on sackcloth on account of thy death.

The Musulman's Wife.—Until the Day of Resurrection shall thy sister suffer grief for thee!

The Mourner's Wife.—Oh, may I die for thy doleful and afflicted sister!

The Musulman.—We are for ever distressed on thy account, O Husain!

The Wife of the Musulman (to her husband).—Go forth now, O man, thou lover of Husain, the slain king, and get a good singer to celebrate the death of that great personage; for men and women, small and great, are coming in crowds, all shedding, as it were, blood from their eyes instead of tears.

The Musulman.—Peace be on you from me, O ye assembly of singers! it is the month to lament for Husain, the King of Karbalá. Come on, therefore, to the pulpit of his sorrow, and hoist up there, zealously, the flag of lamentation for him.

A Mourner.—Let my tears be put in a bottle to be remembered!

The Musulman's Wife.—I am pouring water into the basin, remembering how thy lips were parched with thirst!

The Mourner's Wife.—O heaven, why did you bring to pass such great oppression?

The Singer (addressing the Musulman).—O thou lover of Muhammad the beloved of God, peace be on thee! Be pleased to direct me to the house of lamentation. I, too, am very sorry for what Husain, the king of God's martyrs, has suffered, and take great delight in singing elegies for him in the town.

The Musulman.—Be it known unto you, O women*

* See note †, p. 111, vol. i.

assembled in this house of mourning, that the time has come for you to listen attentively to the commemoration of the death of the lord of the martyrs. All of you must come forth to the scene of its performance, and let tears run down your cheeks for this sad event. (*Two Singers ascend the platform and sing in turns.*)

The First Singer.—O thou whom Gabriel the archangel has the honour to serve as a porter, thou wast cruelly slain on the plain of Karbalá; may my spirit be a ransom for thee! Karbalá was, by thy auspicious arrival, turned into the very heaven, O Husain! O thou that didst fall on the plain, may my spirit be a sacrifice unto thee!

The Second Singer.—O thou, the very threshold of whose habitation is the place where the faithful spirit Gabriel alights, peace be on thee! O thou who wast slain by an idolatrous nation, may my soul be an offering unto thee! Holy prophets of old, O Husain, are all sitting in ashes for thee at thy gate. O Husain, O thou who wast maliciously slain by the wicked, may my soul be made a sacrifice for thee!

The Musulman.—Alas! that I had died! Thou hast none to help thee, O Husain; none to care for thee, or to alleviate thy sorrow.

A Mourner.—Perished be the hands which smote thee with the sword! What was thy sin, dear lord? What were thy faults?

The Musulman.—A thousand times pity for 'Alí Akbar, the similitude of the Seal* of the Prophets, who was cruelly beheaded!

A Mourner.—Oh! he did not see any of the pleasures of this world, nor did he enjoy the sight of the bride in her chamber. A blooming youth, in the flower of his age, he suddenly seized the skirts of the grave!

The Musulman.—Thou didst suffer martyrdom unjustly, O Kásim the son-in-law of Husain. May thy nuptials in Karbalá be unto thee a source of congratulation!

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* See note ‡, p. 40, vol. i.

The Mourner.—Thou didst not sit in the bride-chamber, nor didst thou dye thy hands and feet red with henna ;* but the grave became at last thy bride-chamber.

The First Singer resumes his song in the name of Husain's wife.—O Asghar my infant boy, my darling little thing, how wast thou plunged in thine own blood! How can I describe my sorrow and grief for thee, O dear love! Thy moon-like † lovely face was at last eclipsed by the earth, wherein thou art buried. Oh that I had died in thy stead, my dear child!

The Second Singer continues the plaint.—Thou wast a delight to Husain, O 'Alí Asghar, at all times. Thou wast an ornament to the bosom of the king of land and sea. Thou didst die thirsty and much grieved at heart. How miserable and wretched I must be now thou art gone, my child!

The Musulman.—Oh, may I be a sacrifice for thy lacerated throat, O Asghar,‡ which was pierced through by an arrow! How much thy soul must have been afflicted, dear child!

A Mourner.—Thou wast transfixed with an arrow before thou wert fully nursed. Oh, how it grieves me to think of thy dear pallid face when dying in thy father's arms, O Asghar!

The Singer (in the name of Husain's sister).—Zainab is a straying wanderer in the wilderness of perplexity. She is tossed to and fro by the waves of affliction. Would to God Zainab would give up the ghost at once and be delivered from such misery, for I have become a great burden to myself!

The Second Singer answers in the same manner.—O dear brother Husain, let me be made a sacrifice for thee! Let me perish in order not to remember any more thy tear-shedding eyes! Thou wast helpless and friendless in the

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* See note ‡, p. 118, vol. i. † See note, p. 7, vol. i.

‡ See note, p. 174, vol. i.

plain of Karbalá. Oh that I had been able to avert death from thy few faithful companions at the risk of my own life! Oh that God would put an end to Zainab's life! I am indeed an unbearable burden to myself.

The Musulman's Wife.—The flowers of thy joy were, O Zainab, withered by the blasts of affliction. May God, who alone knows the state of thy mind, comfort thee!

Mourner's Wife.—Thou wast weary of thy life, O Zainab, when in Karbalá, for thou wast led away as a captive by a cruel and tyrannical people.

Caniah, the king (addressing his minister).*—What tumultuous noise is this in our town, O minister? I wonder what mischief and insurrection are brewing. If my subjects are indeed ill-treated or tyrannised over by any persons, you know very well, O minister, that I am just and good enough to punish the oppressor, and deliver the oppressed. What then do these sad, mournful, grievous noises signify which I continually hear? I feel very much affected thereby, O minister.

The Minister.—Yes, I do hear a confused noise from the people of this town, O potent king; I myself am astonished too. What can have been the cause of such an uproar? Thy universal equity reaches everywhere, so that to cry out from injustice in such a peaceful empire is as improper as it is impossible.

The King.—Send forth, O minister, one of the attendants to those who appear to be the principal cause of this

* This name may possibly be derived from Scripture, as it bears a close resemblance to "Coniah" the son of Jehoiakim, King of Judah. Jeremiah denounced the most terrible judgments against this prince, who, together with his seed, was to be "cast into a land which they know not" (Jeremiah xxii. 28). Coniah was, however, taken as a captive to Babylon at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, which occurred about 600 B.C., whereas the events in the text happened more than twelve hundred years subsequently. Unless, therefore, there be a gross anachronism the two persons cannot be one and the same individual, and King Caniah may not impossibly be intended for some Armenian monarch.

uproar, and inquire of them why they sing these mournful songs, and whose death they commemorate so sadly.

The Minister (to an attendant).—Let one of the guards of the royal palace go immediately, and diligently inquire the cause of this noisy disturbance. Let him try to ascertain in what particular part of the city this clamour occurs, that he may be able to give satisfactory information to his imperial majesty.

The Sentry (addressing the mourners).—Thus saith the mighty, the powerful king: "Why are ye so piteously making a sad noise? What has made you so melancholy and disconsolate? His majesty wants to know if anyone has been so rash and bold as to wrong you without considering the fatal consequences thereof.

The People.—O officer, it is the month of lamentation for the chief of our religion, on account of whose death the principal heavenly orbs are well-nigh falling to the earth. It is the time when we generally afflict ourselves for the high priest of our faith. It is that we are lamenting for him on whose account the faithful spirit Gabriel * is now in sackcloth and ashes. The new moon, by its crescent form, shows the intolerance of this heavy burden.

The Officer (bringing word to the King).—May it be known to thy majesty, O king, that certain fugitive Musulmans have taken shelter in this town, and are now bewailing the death of one of their own saints. I do not know anything touching their superstitious customs, but this appears to be the chief cause of their doleful exclamations.

The King.—This is a thing, O wazír, of which I had never heard before. I am greatly disturbed in mind through learning of this new doctrine. I fear the religion of Jesus may be trampled under feet by these people. Help me, therefore, O minister, with thy prudent counsels to extirpate them. Every prime minister is supposed to be a sure guide to his monarch as regards sage advice. Thou must

* See note, p. 15, vol. i.

now extricate me out of this dilemma, and show me which is the best course for me to pursue.

The Minister.—Kings and princes must never interfere with anyone's religion or creed, O monarch! On the contrary, every one should be allowed to follow his own persuasion just as he likes. Thou art not commanded to be a guardian of other men's faith, but solely of thine own. Do not unnecessarily disperse abroad the people, while living peaceably under thy imperial government, by interfering with their religion.

The King.—What thou hast said, O wazír, by way of advice, is undoubtedly both just and prudent. May I ever have the happiness to be directed by thy laudable counsels. But if a monarch should slightingly disregard the political affairs of his kingdom, he is sure soon to see an entire change in the constitution of his government. Maybe these men have some secret end in view, and intend ultimately to subvert our religion by these their artful tricks.

The Minister.—I most humbly state a matter for thy majesty's consideration, hoping thou wilt graciously accept it at the hands of thy servant. Let it please thy majesty not to attempt to change the religion of those living under thy dominion, for they may possibly fall into great excitement against thy government, and the little, feeble ants (as the proverb says) do sometimes flay a fierce lion of his hide. Draw not the arrow unnecessarily out of the quiver, for, alas! when it is shot away from the bow, it is in vain to attempt to keep it away from the butt; so says another proverb.

The King.—O minister, from what appears unto me of thy salutary opinions, I am convinced that thou art a good politician; but one must not fail in regard to religious duties. Thou must send a man, therefore, and summon these men to my presence; no delay must be made in the matter at all.

The Wazír.—Go thou, O sentry, according to the commands of the king, and sing out thy summons, as it were a nightingale, in that garden-like house of lamentation. Let all of them have the honour to come to his majesty's pre-

sence; and be thou diligent to please thy sovereign, and look well to what thou doest.

The Officer (*to the mourners*).—Be it known unto you, O ye mourners, that the king has summoned you to his presence, saying, you all must attend the court, both high and low, male and female, small and great; for his majesty has been greatly disquieted with your religion.

The Leading Musulman.—Let us, O band of mourners, go to the king, and see what he wants from us, or for what reason he has summoned us to his presence.

The King.—What do you mean by these clamorous noises in our country? Your secret designs must be placed before the public. For whom is this lamentation? and whose mourners are ye? Your wailings have put our minds in great trouble. You must not conceal any part of the matter from my majesty, or I shall doom you to perpetual imprisonment as enemies of my crown.

The Leader.—Since thy majesty is so very anxious to know the reason of our sorrowful cryings, we will be bold enough to declare it plainly unto thee. We are lamenting for Husain, the grandson of our Prophet, for whom even Jesus, thine own God and Saviour, was not ashamed to rend his garments.

The King.—Who is this Husain, whose very name is another term for grief? Who is this Husain, the mention of whom has made me uneasy in my mind? Who is this Husain, of whom we have heard nothing, nor is he known at all in our country? Tell me his genealogy, that I should know of whose garden he is the blossom.

The Leader.—O king! Husain is the son of that warlike prince whom we call 'Alí. His grandfather, on the mother's side, is Muhammad, the chief, the topmost piece of God's creation. His father is, as I said before, the famous 'Alí; his brother, Hasan the elect, himself brought up in the bosom of Zahrah,* the virtuous daughter of Muhammad.

* See note, p. 22, vol. i.

He, even this Husain, was cruelly killed, and cherubims and seraphims will lament his death until the Day of Judgment.

The King (roughly).—I know no religion to be true, or from God, except Christianity. These thy statements are no other than vain babblings, or silly fables of old women. What means your going about from house to house making turbulent noises? Do you intend to subvert the holy religion of Jesus with these your nonsensical sayings? But what I have lost yesterday by neglecting my duty, I may find to-day by showing my great zeal. You will see how I am about to put women and men amongst you to great shame. I shall have your delicate, amiable ladies all whipped in public, and their fond husbands all beheaded one by one, in their sight. Boys, have these mourning wretches well thrashed with you pliant sticks, and cut off the heads of their husbands here in my presence.

The Leader's Wife.—God has permitted that I should be thus shamefully treated, so that I may remember Zainab's affliction when she was similarly scourged. Oh, how heaven quenched, to our sorrow, the shining lamp of Zainab the beloved of Husain! Oh, how great must have been her exemplary patience! If I am flogged or beaten by a cruel people, it behoves me to remember that I am not more precious than Zainab the Prophet's grand-daughter, who, too, was oppressed! If my beloved son be beheaded with the sword of tyranny, my child is not dearer in reality than 'Alí Akbar* the son of Husain.

The Mourners.—O Husain, dear lord, look upon us! Our sad condition is not, surely, hidden from thee! Suffer not that we should any longer be tried with this painful, cruel treatment. Let us not fall martyrs to the sword of injustice.

The Wazír (interceding).—O king, let not these few miserable creatures be so much oppressed; every one is sup-

* See note, p. 8, vol. i.

posed to act according to his own religion. They are lamenting the death of their own Imám or Pontiff, let it please thy majesty to pardon the faults of this mournful congregation. I think it is not right to kill this people. It is more advisable to give up such ideas at once.

The King.—See, O friends, to what a pitch the cause of Husain's followers is carried. Well, then, they may be imprisoned. Drag these renegades to the dungeon, and let them be enchained with fetters of iron, both men and women. Let him for whom you have been lamenting come now, O ye mourners, and deliver you from my hand if he can.

The Leader (wailing in prison).—O Husain, for thy sake we are fastened with heavy chains in this way!

The Mourner.—O Husain, thou art certainly aware of our state in this dismal dungeon!

The Leader.—O Husain, would to God I had been offered a ransom for thy poor captives of Karbalá!

The Mourner.—Oh! would to God I had become a sacrifice for 'Abid,* thy suffering afflicted son who alone survived!

The Leader's Wife.—Let me perish for the friendlessness of Zainab thy bemoaning sister!

The Mourner's Wife.—May a thousand souls like mine be offered for Sukainah thy miserable little daughter!

The Leader's Wife.—Oh! who consoled Husain's weeping children?

The Mourner's Wife.—Alas! what was the state of Zainab's heart, poor Husain's galled and fretted sister?

The Leader.—Who would give medicine, O Lord, to Husain's sick boy, entitled the best of God's worshippers?

The Mourner.—In that ruined place, when he burned from enflaming fever?

The Leader.—Let us bewail the illness of 'Abid the afflicted son of Husain.

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* See note †, p. 96, vol. i.

The Mourner.—Let us lay bricks under our heads in remembrance of him.

The Leader.—O Husain, for thy sake these chains are put round about our necks.

The Mourner.—O Husain, God is our witness that we have none beside thee to help us.

The Leader's Wife.—O Husain, may I die for the exile of thy weeping sister!

The Mourner's Wife.—Yea, may I be sacrificed for thy groaning children, who have been overtaken by sorrow!

The Leader.—O Husain, we are ready to give our life for thee.

The Mourner.—In order to show our great love for thee, we are bound with these heavy chains.

The King.—I am uneasy to night, O wazír, owing to what I have lately done. It seems I am about to repent of my action. For I fear that this my work will make Christ an enemy to me; and if Jesus became one's foe, thou knowest, O minister, that it is no trifling matter. Let my bed therefore be spread and my pillow be put right, peradventure sleep may deliver my soul from disquietude.

The Prisoners all at once cry out.—Wheresoever thou art, O lord Husain, come and save us, and avert from us the oppression of the tyrant Caniah.

Husain (*coming out of the grave with his wounded body*). —From the sighs and groans of my companions and friends, a fire is again kindled in my veins and in my very soul. The unfavourable revolution of time has, once more, made my sister a captive. My Zainab is once more crying out against unjust and improper treatment. Husain is slain afresh through violence. Shimar,* Husain's murderer, is advancing against him a second time. My upright body has again received mortal wounds from the malicious enemy. Heaven has spread salt over my sores to aggravate my pains.

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* See note, p. 43, vol. i.

Fátimah, the mother of Husain (coming out of her sepulchre).—I hear Husain, the light of my all-seeing eyes, groaning. Trembling has overtaken all the members of my body under the earth. Has my Husain gone again to Karbalá? Is Shimar come to the same place again? Is Asghar, Husain's little child, hushed afresh to death? Are 'Alí Akbar's curling locks dishevelled anew? Is Zainab once more become a melancholy nightingale? Has the noon of 'Áshuráa, the tenth of Muharram,* come a second time? Is my daughter Zainab still weary of her life? Is she, another time, fastened with chains of cruelty?

Gabriel.—Do not weep, O Fátimah, nor scratch thy face to show thy excessive grief; neither beat on thy head any more, nor dishevel thy locks. Let not the angels of heaven suffer more from sorrow. Let not the foundations of the world be suddenly overturned. Why is thy cypress-like† elegant stature thus bent? Why do thy members all shake like a weeping willow?

Fátimah.—Wonder not, O Gabriel, to see me thus cast down and afflicted with grief. How can I remain silent whilst Husain sighs and cries? Run, O faithful spirit, to my assistance, since it is Husain's sad voice that has thus grieved me; and flying to Karbalá with speed, inquire why Husain is making such an ado? Is he again surrounded by the cruel people of Kúfah?

Gabriel (to Husain).—May the soul of the faithful spirit be offered to the dust of thy tomb! Why hast thou put heaven and earth, O Husain, in such great agitation? Thy mother, the best‡ of all women, is sorrowing for thy distress. She has dishevelled her locks owing to the excess of her grief. Let me know what has happened, that I may

* "The Muharram (*lit.* that which is sacred) commences on the first of the month of that name, and is continued for ten days, the tenth day being called 'Ashuráa."—Hughes' "Notes on Muhammadanism, p. 163, ed. 1877.

† See note, p. 10, vol. i.

‡ See note *, p. 42, vol. i.

apprise her thereof, that she should not injure any more her sacred ringlets.

Husain.—Go thou, O faithful spirit, and bid my dearly beloved mother kindly come to me. Let her come, for I have fresher news than those of Karbalá; let her come, for my dear friends are in trouble. Yea, let her come, for my comforters are overwhelmed with grief! Persecution is always the vanguard of true love. I do not mean as regards myself, but with reference to my holy pilgrims; I am not concerned for myself, but for them.

Gabriel (*returning to Fátimah*).—Thy son Husain, saluting thee most respectfully, says, "Be graciously pleased to come to me as soon as possible, and see what an incurable malady afflicts me. I have got you still sadder news than the tale of that which happened to me at Karbalá.

Fátimah (*departing to meet Husain*).—O my lost son Husain! my son, my son! O my tender but pitiably withered plant! my son, my son!

Husain.—Mother, I am going to breathe my last for want of some one to help me. Mother, why dost thou not sympathise with me in my sorrow? I wonder what day will be to me a time of rest? Why dost thou not soothe my irritated sores with the ointment of thy tender consolation?

Fátimah.—I see that thou art much harassed, my son, and greatly distracted by different impulses, so far as the state of thy mind is concerned. Have thy wounds began to smart with pain, that thou groanest so piteously? I am indeed sorry for thee, but what does my grief benefit? For thy sad case is such a hopeless one, that it can never be remedied.

Husain.—My body received, dear mother, from the hand of the malicious foe, a thousand nine hundred and fifty stabs. All these many wounds of which thou heardest, healed again through the affectionate tears of my blessed mourners, except three mortal cuts that cannot recover until the Day of Judgment. First, the wound of 'Alí

Akbar, which I bear continually in my heart; second, that of Kásim, the memory of which still remains in my mind; third, that of 'Abbás my brother, which has galled my soul.*

Fátimah.—Come, dear son, let me sew up thy wounds with the needle of my eye-lashes. Be not grieved, I shall set thee before the Lord in the Day of Judgment, face to face, in this very condition.

Husain.—Do not trouble thyself, O lamp of my dark hours, for the wounds I have lastly mentioned can never be remedied. But I am overwhelmed with another difficulty, and am complaining owing to a different circumstance altogether. I can bear my former burdens, for now they seem, comparatively speaking, tolerable. If thou hast any remedy, mother, do apply it to my heart, my broken heart. There is no good in wiping away tears from the eyes; try, if thou mayest, to stop them at their very fountain, the heart.

Fátimah.—Thou appearest dreadfully excited, my son. Thy words point out the greatness of thy anguish. Thou hast experienced calamities enough already. What new miseries art thou going again to disclose?

Husain.—I voluntarily submitted to the Divine will in suffering my head to be cut off. I gave, in His cause, my two dear sons, 'Alí Akbar and 'Alí Asghar. I consented that my virtuous sister Zainab, and my precious daughter Fátimah, should be led away as captives; I allowed that my tents, with all their furniture, should be plundered by the enemy; I endured all these hardships for the sake of the salvation of my people, and for their spiritual and eternal good. Why should, then, Husain's mourners be to-day despitefully used? Why should my beloved friends be imprisoned at such a time for nought?

Fátimah.—Let me be offered as a sacrifice for thy mourners, O Husain. Let me be a prisoner for those who are captives for thy sake, O dear son. Arise quickly, let

* See Scenes XVII., XVIII., and XIX.

me go and visit them in their bonds; let me show them my great sympathy for their sufferings. (*Husain and Fátimah enter the prison.*)

Husain.—Peace be unto you, O ye men that mourn, being bound with chains of sorrow! Peace be unto you, O ye women that lament bitterly in this prison!

Fátimah.—Behold! I am she who taketh great interest in your cause. Good ladies, lay your heads on my lap.

Husain.—If you be thirsty, here is water ready for you. If you want a fragrant perfume, I have some nice rose-water at hand.

Fátimah.—Who has been so cruel as to put you in such iron chains? Oh! you remind me, dear ones, of the heavy fetters of Zain-ul-'Abid-dín, my grandson. If ever, O ladies, you happen to spend a day or night in the midst of distress and woe, let it remind you, in some degree, of the calamitous state of Zainab.

The Leader.—Who are you, O ye angel-like beings, who thus take pity on these miserable prisoners? Who art thou, O amiable lady, whose arrow-like stature, though thou art young, is bent like a bow? And who art thou, O dignified personage, from the sole of whose foot, even unto the head, there is no soundness therein?

Husain.—I am he, even he, who was beheaded for your sakes. I am he, even he, that maketh intercession for your sins. It is I who have consecrated my body to the benefit of them that love me. It is even I who have offered my soul and body to the Lord in His service, and that lady is my mother.

The Leader.—To be sure thou art a venerable dignitary, but tell us, in plain language, what is thy proper name? for thy words have added grief to our griefs. What an effect thine influential name, yet unsaid, has wrought in me!

Husain.—I am Husain, for whose cause thou art imprisoned. I am mourning for those who weep for me; and that bemoaning woman is Zahrah my mother, who cries for the female sex of your solemn congregation.

The Leader.—Be it known unto thee, O elect of the Creator, that they have prohibited me from mourning for thee; see how I have been cast into prison, and bound with chains. I adjure thee, by the head of thy grandfather, the Prophet of God, to release me from this confinement. I adjure thee, by the curling locks of 'Alí Akbar thy son, to deliver thy mourners from contempt.

Husain.—Make no mention of my Akbar's name, O ye who mourn for me, and do not aggravate my sorrow in so doing. One desire I had, which is still in my heart, and will be there till the Day of Judgment, to wit, to be present at 'Alí Akbar's marriage. I will, however, deliver you, O my prisoners. Depend on it, I am faithful to my word.

Fátimah.—Trouble not yourselves any longer, ladies, I am now going to deliver you from the chains of affliction. Since you are Husain's friends, I have regard for all of you. You are dearer to me even than my daughter Zainab.

Husain (addressing Gabriel).—O Gabriel, thou blessed trustee of the Most High, call unto me two tormenting angels, that I may send them to punish this Christian king, for I am greatly distressed on account of my followers.

Gabriel (to the Angels).—Be it known unto you, O ye angels of the nethermost regions, that Husain, the leader of the thirsty, has called you. Hasten to see what his majesty requires of you to do; for surely his command is equivalent to that of our Lord Himself.

The tormenting Angels (to Husain).—Peace be unto thee, O thou grandson of the illustrious Prophet of God! What may be the duty which we are summoned by thy holy authority to perform? The blessed Creator has charged us to be most attentive and ready to execute thy will.

Husain.—O ye furious beings appointed by the glorious Deity as messengers from the infernal regions, go in haste to that wicked, unhappy creature Caniah, and putting a yoke and collar of fire round his neck, cast him headlong into the flames of torment. For he has haughtily ill-treated

those that love me, and unjustly prevented my mourners from lamenting for me.

The Tormenting Angels.—Come, wretch, let us put a chain of fire round thy neck.

The King.—Oh! what have I done that I should be so cruelly treated on that account?

The Tormenting Angels.—Silence, sir, and wear the chain quietly, without the least noise.

The King.—Rather have compassion on my delicate body.

The Tormenting Angels.—Thou wilt see how we will cast thee headlong into everlasting fire.

The King.—O Lord God, how can I bear such tortures?

The Tormenting Angels.—Now thy body shall be burnt with flames.

The King.—Alas! it is impossible for me to bear such torture.

The Tormenting Angels.—Art thou so bold and wicked a man as to oppose the Apostle of God?

The King.—Oh, I have never done wrong to any one, even in ignorance!

The Tormenting Angels.—Thou hast grievously oppressed Husain's friends.

The King.—Oh! I have acted foolishly, and without thought.

The Tormenting Angels.—Enter now the fire, thou miserable wretch.

The King.—By whose order is this thing, O ye terrible beings?

The Tormenting Angels.—It is by the order of Husain, the monarch of Karbalá.

The King.—O tormentors, show me Husain, for God's sake!

The Tormenting Angels.—There is Husain, the glorious person, opposite.

The King.—O Husain, deliver my soul from this bitter torment. O Husain, pour some water on me, for I am in

burning flames. O Husain, thou son of 'Alí, let my supplications come unto thee; save my soul from perdition, I humbly beseech thee.

Husain (*to the Tormenting Angels*).—Lay hold of this malefactor and throw him down into the flames, for that is what he deserves; for the infernal regions are indeed an abode for every tyrant.

The Tormenting Angels (*to the King*).—Get thee into the place of torment, thou vile tyrant. This very moment thou shalt be consumed to ashes.

The King.—O ye happy beings, tell me who, in the sight of Husain, is highly esteemed, or whom does he tenderly love, that I may ask Husain to forgive me through the merits of such an one.

The Tormenting Angels.—Know, O thou great sinner, that, in that worthy one's estimation, none is dearer than 'Alí Akbar his beloved son. Thou mayest beg forgiveness for his sake.

The King (*to Husain*).—I have sinned, O temporal and spiritual king; pardon me, pardon me! I have walked in the paths of wickedness and injustice; pardon thou me, pardon thou me! I adjure thee, by the curling locks of 'Alí Akbar, that thou forgive me my many faults and sins, and receive this penitent suppliant into thy favour. I committed this fearful sin, O my lord Husain, intending thereby to advance, or rather defend, the religion of Jesus. But now I wholly repent of my folly, and humbly implore thy forgiveness and mercy.

Husain.—Ah! again I am put in mind of 'Alí Akbar my well-beloved son. Again my melancholy head gets distracting thoughts into its brain. Thy manifold sins and faults are all forgiven thee, O Caniah, since thou fully repentest of them. I do deliver thee from thy torments on condition that thou shalt release my mourners from imprisonment, become a Musulman thyself, and continually set up lamentations for me.

The King.— I had sunk for many years in the mire of

ignorance through my own folly; but now, thanks be to God, I am saved and delivered from idolatry and Christian superstition. Be thou my witness, O Lord God, that, with all my heart, I protest before this thy saint "that there is no other God but the one true God."

Husain (to the Tormenting Angels).—O ye assembly of angels, now that he has become one of my followers, he must be exalted above the seventh heaven in honour and glory. For my sake, you all must revere and respect him. Take off this yoke and chain, therefore, from his neck.

The Angels.—Happy art thou, O king, in that thou hast embraced the religion of Husain, who died thirsty for all. Rest quietly now in thy bed, and enjoy everlasting tranquillity; but mind that hereafter thou lovest the followers of Husain as a sign of gratitude for all the favours received.

The King (awaking).—Thanks be to God that I have become a Shí'ah! Now am I sure that I am accepted by God, both in this world and the next.

The Minister.—O king, I see thee, suddenly but cheerfully, awaking from sleep. Tell me, please, the particulars of what thou hast seen in thy dream.

The King.—There appeared unto me a dreadful, repulsive-looking person, who said angrily to me that he had been ordered by his king to put fiery fetters on my feet. On my asking him who his king might be, he replied that it was Husain the grandson of Muhammad, and that he was much enraged against me for my cruelties. So I went to him, and earnestly entreating him, made very many supplications to him; but all in vain. For he said there was no other alternative left me but my becoming a Musulman; so I consented, and, in his presence, made a full confession of my new faith, for which he said to me: "O king, I am now well pleased with thee. Go thy way, and release my followers from thy cruel bonds, that I may, in return, forgive thy sins in the Day of Judgment."

The Wazír.—No mortal has ever attained to such a

height of perfect glory with the Most High as Husain. All the prophets unanimously agree that, of those born of woman, there has risen none, up to this time, greater than the thirsty-lipped Husain.

The King—Up, O minister, get thee to the prison and see how those poor prisoners fare; bring them, with all respect and honour, to me. Hasten, without any delay or question, fetch Husain's mourners here. Oh! I do not know with what language to apologise to those oppressed souls, for there is no excuse for such a wicked deed as mine. Commence mourning, O ye servants, all of you, for Husain, and put on your black clothes in commemoration of his sorrows.

The Minister.—Thanks be to God who made the day-spring from on high to visit his people, that they, being delivered out of the hand of their enemies, might serve him without fear. Come forth, O ye prisoners, from your dark dungeon, for your sighs and tears have moved the king's heart. Get yourselves at once to the presence of his majesty; you may perform your sad work, if you like, even now in his majesty's court.

The Leader.—Thanks be to God that we have surmounted this great difficulty, that our prayers were not offered to the throne of mercy for nought, that after all the King of Karbalá has taken notice of our sad case and this our state of misery.

The King.—I am greatly ashamed for my cruel behaviour towards you, O ye mourners, for I confess that I have hurt your feelings not a little. Come, let me kiss your hands and feet as sure tokens of sorrow; and go in peace to your own houses, saying continually, "Cursed be Yazíd,* and Shimar his general, in that they murdered Husain."

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* See note †, p. 17, vol. i., and note, p. 43, vol. i.

SCENE XXXVII.

THE RESURRECTION.

THE Day of Resurrection having arrived, the angel Gabriel is commissioned to bid Saráfíl blow the last trump and summon all mankind to judgment. No sooner have the echoes of the blast died away than the earth opens her "mouth, as it were a pearl shell, and casts forth her dead"—patriarchs, prophets, saints, and sinners of every kind and degree. First to appear is Jacob, who pleads for mercy for himself, indifferent to what may happen to his son Joseph, who in turn seeks his own safety, not caring as to the fate of his aged father. In like manner with regard to Abraham and Ismá'íl, David and Solomon, each of whom concerns himself only with his own salvation. Even Noah has no solicitude for the nations descended from him. "Have mercy on them if it pleaseth Thee, or consume them in the abode of torture if Thou likest," is his address to the Almighty. Very different is the conduct of Muhammad, who, astonished that "there is none among men who cares for poor sinful creatures," begs the Lord of Heaven to "look mercifully upon mankind," especially upon sinners amongst the Prophet's own people.

The "computers of the deeds" of men now open their registers, according to the entries in which every man is to be judged—they that have done good, being carried to the realms of Paradise; they that have done ill, to the regions of torment. A motley crew of sinners present themselves before the tribunal of judgment, and receive the condemnation due to the offences they have committed; whereupon Muhammad intercedes for them, but in vain. The Prophet of Arabia then summons Hasan and bids him join him in making "supplication to the Lord, peradventure the Almighty will have mercy on these people." Still the stern decrees remain unreversed. Distressed in mind and anxious, Muhammad casts aside his turban, his rod, and cloak, as useless, seeing that his prayers on behalf of

his people are not answered in the Day of Atonement. The angel Gabriel bids the offended Prophet of Arabia replace the sacred emblems, and be of good cheer, as his mediation for his followers will be accepted by the Lord; but Husain must lend his aid, as "he alone can raise the feet of sinners from the mud of destruction." Accordingly, Husain, accompanied by the martyrs of Karbalá, appears on the scene, and narrating in piteous accents the terrible sufferings he underwent on that fatal plain, prays the Lord on that account to have mercy on mankind.

Gabriel now hands the keys of Paradise to the Prophet, saying, that he who hath undergone most trials and sufferings shall be intercessor for his fellow-creatures. Thereupon a distracted band of prophets headed by Abraham, "the friend of God," beg Muhammad to "manage to save them." One of the number, Jacob, more venturesome than the rest, endeavours to substantiate his claim to the high position of mediator; but the matter is soon set at rest. Gabriel appears, and addressing Husain, speaks words full of consolation, on which the whole fabric of the Shí'ah religion rests: "Permission has proceeded from the Judge, the gracious Creator, that I should give to thy hand this key of intercession. Go thou and deliver from the flames every one who has in his life-time shed but a single tear for thee, every one who has in any way helped thee, every one who has performed a pilgrimage to thy shrine, or mourned for thee, and every one who has written tragic verses for thee. Bear each and all with thee to Paradise."

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*The Holy Ghost (to Gabriel).**—Gabriel, brother, let me speak to thee. Thus hath the glorious Lord commanded, "Go quickly, and, addressing Saráfíl† the trumpeter, say: 'Behold the morning of the Day of Resurrection is come! blow, then, with thy trumpet, for it is time to take account with the children of Adam.'" To-day the eternal Lord is about to call all his creatures to account; to-day will God reward every action of mankind. Go and give orders that Paradise be decorated, and give notice that the gates of hell be thrown open. Go, and quickly carry out the orders with success, otherwise thou shalt be burnt with the flame of the lightning of Divine wrath!

Gabriel.—Know thou, O Saráfíl, that the stern decree hath dropped from the pen of God on the surface of the

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* See note, p. 15, vol. i.

† See note, p. 63, vol. i.

table. Yea, verily, the positive decree of the Creator of the universe has been issued to the effect that thou must blow the trumpet this very minute.

Saráfíl (blowing the first trumpet).—To whom doth the kingdom belong? To God, the sole, the conqueror. Where are they who, from self-estimation, considered themselves gods? (*Blows the second trumpet.*) Blessed be He who hath created death and life!

Gabriel.—Hear me, O guardian of the lofty Paradise, thou art commanded to decorate and beautify the mansions of heaven. Go and paint the doors and the walls of the eternal abode of God's creatures, and let the ringlets of the fair damsels * of Paradise be clustered with curls.

The Guardian of Paradise (drawing aside the curtains).—Blessed be He who hath created Paradise, eternity, and fair damsels! Whosoever hath sown good seeds in the field of his faith, God will now reward him with Paradise. That servant of the Lord who hath offered his life a sacrifice for his Maker, the Lord will allot to him the flowing fountain of Salsábíl † in heaven.

Gabriel.—O keeper of the infernal regions, open thou the gates of that abode of torture. Kindle thy fire, for it is the Day of Resurrection, the time of wrath. Let the lives of the sinners of the world be burnt like stubble by the unquenchable flames.

The Keeper of the Infernal Regions.—Terrible is He who hath created the flames of perdition and eternal damna-

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* "Mohammed, to enhance the value of Paradise with his Arabians, chose rather to imitate the indecency of the Magians than the modesty of the Christians in this particular (marriage), and lest his beatified Moslems should complain that anything was wanting, bestows on them wives, as well as the other comforts of life; judging, it is to be presumed, from his own inclinations, that they would think all other enjoyments not worth their acceptance if they were to be debarred from this."—Sale's "Koran," Prel. Dis., sec. iv. p. 101, ed. 1734.

† See note, p. 90, vol. i.

tion. Woe unto them who are drunk with the wine of ignorance! Woe unto those who, being unacquainted with God's perfections, have compared Him to blocks of wood and stone! * Behold the hot flames playing about in different directions! Woe unto all adulterous sinners! The fires are scorching on every side. Will the hard-hearted recusants now remain stone-deaf?

Saráfíl (blowing the third trumpet).—Protection, then, belongeth unto God. He best rewards, and is most excellent to compensate. The Day of Resurrection is made manifest. Where are the people of Samúd,† the wicked nation? Where are the profligate 'Ádites?‡ There is none besides

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* "It was from this gross idolatry, or the worship of inferior deities, or *companions of God*, as the *Arabs* continue to call them, that *Mohammed* reclaimed his countrymen, establishing the sole worship of the true God among them; so that how much soever the *Mohammedans* are to blame in other points, they are far from being idolaters, as some ignorant writers have pretended."—Sale's "Koran," Prel. Dis., sec. i. p. 16, ed. 1734.

† "The tribe of *Thamúd* were the posterity of *Thamúd* the son of *Gather* the son of *Aram*, who, falling into idolatry, the prophet Sáleh was sent to bring them back to the worship of the true *God*. . . . . A small number of the people of *Thamúd* hearkened to the remonstrances of Sáleh, but the rest requiring, as a proof of his mission, that he should cause a she-camel, big with young, to come out of a rock in their presence, he accordingly obtained it of *God*, and the camel was immediately delivered of a young one ready weaned; but they, instead of believing, cut the hamstrings of the camel and killed her; at which act of impiety God being highly displeased, three days after struck them dead in their houses by an earthquake, and a terrible noise from heaven, which some say was the voice of *Gabriel* the archangel crying aloud, *Die all of you. Sáleh* with those who were reformed by him were saved from this destruction."—Sale's "Koran," Prel. Dis., sec. i. p. 7, ed. 1734.

‡ "The tribe of *Ad* were descended from *Ad* the son of *Aws* the son of *Aram* the son of *Sem* the son of *Noah*, who, after the confusion of tongues, settled in *Al Akháf*, or the *winding sands*, in the province of *Hadramaut*, where his posterity greatly multiplied. . . . . The descendants of *Ad*, in process of time, falling from the worship of the true God into idolatry, God sent the Prophet *Húd* (who is generally

the Lord of the whole world. Where is Nimrod * now? and where is Shidád? †

Gabriel (*to the Holy Spirit*).—O writer of revelations, why are the nine curtains let down? Why is the quiescent earth in agitation and tremor? The sun has lost its brightness, the moon doth not give her light; earth and water are changed into wine and fire; the mountains and rocks are all in contortion. What does all this mean?

The Holy Ghost.—Know, O thou messenger of the Lord, that the world has come to an end. God's work is finished. The Day of Account has appeared, the hour of resurrection is at hand. The veil drawn over the deeds of men is removed; it is time that the general consummation should manifest itself.

Gabriel.—Whatever we are commanded to do, let us perform the same, and diligently carry out the Divine orders?

The Holy Ghost.—This, O Gabriel, is the order lately issued. Thou must clear the mirror, thou must call out all the dead that have died from the beginning of the world until now. Yea, call, then, that they may spring forth from the earth like grass; let the birds be shut up in their cages, and not be allowed to fly about.

Gabriel.—O all who are dead, come to life this very minute; let the earth open her mouth as it were a pearl-shell, and cast forth her dead! O ye prophets and saints, come forth and receive favour from the Lord. And, O ye sinners of all nations, enter ye into the abode of shame and damnation.

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agreed to be *Heber*) to preach to and reclaim them. But they refusing to acknowledge his mission, or to obey him, God sent a hot and suffocating wind, which blew seven nights and eight days together, and entering at their nostrils passed through their bodies and destroyed them all, a very few only excepted, who had believed in Húd, and retired with him to another place."—Sale's "Koran," Prel. Dis., sec. i. p. 6, ed. 1734.

* See note †, p. 177, vol. i.

† See note †, p. 50.

Jacob, the patriarch (arising from the dead).*—I am the prophet Jacob, O Lord God. The heat of the Day of Resurrection is burning me. I am scorched from head to foot, O God. O gracious and merciful Lord, have compassion on the aged Jacob, and do to Joseph my son whatever thou likest.

Joseph (coming out from the grave).—The Day of Resurrection having arrived, Joseph the patriarch is in great trial, O God! Thou, O Lord, art the source of all mercy, and to-day is the day of compassion. Save me, O Lord, as thou knowest me best, and do to my venerable father Jacob whatsoever pleaseth thee.

Abraham (arising from the dead).—O God, the hot sun of the Day of Resurrection is scorching me! I am Abraham † Thy friend; why should I be burnt in this way? O gracious Creator, have mercy on me, and do Thou carry my son Ismá'íl and sacrifice him as it pleaseth Thee. What do I care about my son if I can but save myself from the torment of the day? The thought of Ismá'íl ‡ has well-nigh gone out of my head altogether.

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* See Sale's "Koran," chap. xii. p. 187, ed. 1734.

† "Abraham in a time of dearth sent to a friend of his in Egypt for a supply of corn; but the friend denied him, saying, in his excuse, that though there was a famine in their country also, yet had it been for Abraham's own family, he would have sent what he desired, but he knew he wanted it only to entertain his guests and give away to the poor, according to his usual hospitality. The servants whom Abraham had sent on this message, being ashamed to return empty, to conceal the matter from their neighbours, filled their sacks with fine white sand, which in the East pretty much resembles meal. Abraham being informed by his servants, on their return, of their ill-success, the concern he was under threw him into a sleep; and in the meantime Sarah, knowing nothing of what had happened, opening one of the sacks, found good flower in it, and immediately set about making of bread. Abraham awaking and smelling new bread, asked her whence she had the flower? 'Why, says she, from your friend in Egypt.' 'Nay,' replied the Patriarch, 'it must have come from no other than my friend God Almighty."—Sale's "Koran," chap. iv. p. 76, ed. 1734.

‡ See note ‡, p. 290, vol. i.

Ismá'íl (*appearing*).—O Judge of the day, have mercy on Ismá'íl the victim, and do to Thy friend Abraham whatever Thou thinkest right. I am burning, burning! yea, consuming from head to foot! Pour some water on this my fire, for I am wasted with heat, O Lord.

David (*coming out from his sepulchre*).—Pity David, Thy servant, O Lord God! The heat hath consumed me, Lord. Have mercy on David, and save him from all his troubles. Oh! be gracious to me, for there is none in my sad state; and let Solomon's throne * be blown away by the wind as it may. It does not concern me at all.

King Solomon.—O God, the terror of the Day of Resurrection has horrified my mind. I am King Solomon, but the seat † of kingdom is gone from me, O Lord. Make me glad with Thy mercy to-day, and, being a sovereign, Thou mayest judge David just as Thou likest; that is nothing to me.

Noah (*rising to life*).—Woe unto me! woe unto me! I am Noah the prophet. I am about to be consumed in this most dreadful disturbance of the Resurrection Day. O Lord, light a candle of mercy for me, and be my salvation; as for the nations descended from me, have mercy on them if it pleaseth Thee, or consume them in the abode of torture if Thou likest.

Gabriel (*to Muhammad*).—O thou who art in station higher than the throne of God, walk out from Paradise, for it is the Day of Judgment. O solar orb, thou must bring thy satellite with thee. I mean thou must fetch with thee 'Alí thy successor. (*Muhammad and 'Alí, together with some angels, walk out from Paradise.*)

Muhammad.—"There is no power or strength but in God." What strange commotion is this on the Day of Judgment? all prophets are confused in regard to their affairs. Nothing is manifest throughout creation except

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* See note †, p. 57.

† See note, p. 81, vol. i.

agitation and confusion, and there is none among men who cares for poor sinful creatures. Look mercifully upon mankind, O God, especially upon sinners of my own people.

'Alí.—May I be a ransom for thee, O sovereign of the empire of religion! Be thou so good as to seat thyself on the pulpit of mediation. Send forth, first, the praise of God the absolute Lord, and manifest the power of His glory to His regenerate creatures. After that, let the companions make haste, and let the computers of the deeds of men open their registers. It is the time of recompense for sin and transgressions; the smallest thing man has done in his life-time he is to give an account thereof in the minutest manner possible.

The Prophet (seated in the pulpit).—Praise be unto God the Lord of all creatures, praises from all eternity to all eternity, even to Him who has made me to possess the standard of praise and glory. Praise unto Him who has appointed Paradise for those who obey Him, and hell-fire for the disobedient. The reward of good is good.

Gabriel.—O ye computers of men's deeds, make haste now; look into your books, and commence reckoning. Make a clear distinction between the righteous and the wicked, and requite every man according to the works he has done. Let those that are sinners be dragged to hell, but let the doers of righteousness be carried to the garden of delight. Good and bad will be distinguished by their different actions, each having a particular abode as a reward for his work, either in Hell or Paradise.

The Scribe.—Bring ye the people whose hands are bound up and their wretched souls worn out under the burden of sin.

The Sinners.—Good God, have mercy on us, we are sinners; we have done wrong, and are therefore made miserable. O great Lord, we were wont to set our heart on the pleasures of the world when we were in it; have mercy upon us now, for we are burning from the heat.

The Scribe (*lifting up the book*).—Your eyes were wide open to the things of the world, why did you stretch your hands to the property of others. You used greedily to gather money unlawfully; to-day, therefore, you deserve the torments of hell-fire. O keeper, inflict punishment on these sinners. Take them to the flames, and torment them.

The Sinners (*addressing Muhammad*).—O Messenger of God, regard us with pity and compassion; have mercy on our sad state and distracted condition. O 'Alí, it is the Day of Intercession, rend thou thy garments; come and save thy Shí'ahs, who are burning in agony.

Muhammad.—O Lord, my people are consumed; have mercy on them. Pass over their transgressions, for their sighs and groans grieve my soul. Alas! my followers are consuming in the flames. O merciful Lord, overlook the faults of the sinners of my people, and forgive them all.

Gabriel.—O Prophet of the latter end of the world, thus hath the Lord commanded. Withdraw from these sinners, and leave them. If the sinful people's bodies be burnt with fire, that is nothing compared to what they deserve. Remove thyself far from them, O Prophet, for this is a sentence from the Almighty Judge.

Muhammad (*going to the cemetery of Bakía', and calling out Hasan from the grave**).—O Hasan, thou who wast unjustly destroyed with cruel poison; O Hasan, who didst drink the draught of death in a melancholy bowl, come out from thy grave and assist me. Help me, for my followers are being consumed in torture.

Imám Hasan (*coming forth, wrapped in a shroud*).—Peace be unto thee, O unique pearl of the sea of faith! Peace be unto thee, thou solacing companion of the faith-

* See note, p. 169, vol. i.; note, p. 277, vol. ii.; and note, p. 306, vol. ii.

ful spirit! What horror is this which has made the world tremble like a willow tree, which has thus agitated the beasts and birds, nay, the whole creation? None has ever, with his eyes, seen such horror. Methinks the Day of Resurrection has come.

The Prophet.—O child of my poor daughter, peace be unto thee! O thou whose frame was withered with poison, peace be on thee! Be thou sure that the Day of Account is before us. Come and observe the state of consternation amongst God's creatures. Come, let us pour tears like rain, and make supplication to the Lord; peradventure the Almighty will have mercy on these people.

The Scribe (*to the sinners*).—O ye multitudes struck dumb with astonishment, ye silent images, ye who are bound with fetters, chains, and yokes, why did you enslave yourselves to your lusts and passions? Why did you sell your goods to men with light weights? Come, O keeper, take these and carry them off; take vengeance on them in the unquenchable fire.

The Sinners.—O God's Messenger, we pray thee to remember us with favour, we are wasting away; run, thou, and save us! We are tormented, we are companions of sorrow, we are in great affliction. Though we are sinners, we are surely thy people?

Muhammad.—O great God, have mercy on the sins of my people. Have mercy, O Lord, for I am most terribly distressed and anxious. O God, graciously kindle a torch of mercy, and, in Thy goodness, prevent my people from being burnt in yonder flames.

Gabriel.—Withdraw from the people of disobedience, O Prophet of the Lord. Abandon these wretches, and talk no more of them; they are only fit to be eternally destroyed. Go thou to thy place, for it is time God's justice should be made manifest.

The Scribe (*to another band of sinners*).—O ye party bound in chains of sorrow, it is written that ye are all men of usury. Through your covetousness in hoarding

up gold and silver you are thus debased. Usury* cannot be made lawful by subterfuges. Take ye away these sinners with ignominy and shame; let them taste the punishment due to their practice of taking interest.

The Sinners.—O Messenger of the two worlds, we beseech thee to deliver us, for we were always weeping for thy grandson Husain. Though we are miserable sinners, as no one can doubt, still remember, O Prophet, that we are Husain's followers.

Muhammad (throwing away his turban, his rod, and cloak).†—A prophet whose followers are carried to hell in the Day of Judgment, a turban is of no use to him. I do not want any rod, nor do I care for my cloak; all that I seek is the salvation of my people. What shall I do, O God, patience has quite gone from me? Lord, why should my people be consigned to everlasting perdition?

Gabriel.—O bearer of good tidings and denouncer of threats, take thy turban and place it on thy head; here is thy cloak, take it, and wear it also. O Prophet, hold this thy rod in thy hand; let not, O noble chief, the throne of God be shaken by thee. O Messenger of the world, I pray thee not to pour tears down thy cheeks; God, being good, will forgive the sins of thy people.

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* Usury was strictly forbidden by Muhammad, see Sale's "Koran," chap. ii. p. 33, and chap. xxx. p. 333, ed. 1734.

† Muhammad used to wear, says Sprenger, "a sheet or square shawl, which was thrown over the left shoulder and wrapped round the body under the right arm." ("Life of Mohammed," p. 86, ed. 1851.) According to Sir W. Muir, the colour of the mantle was red. ("Life of Mahomet," vol. iv. p. 295, ed. 1861.) When conducting the service in the Mosque he was dressed in a "mantle of striped yemen stuff, six cubits in length, thrown over his shoulders; the lower garment was a girdle of fine cloth from Omán, but of smaller dimensions than the other. These robes were worn only on Friday, and on the two great festivals. At the conclusion of each service they were folded up and put carefully away."—Muir's "Life of Mahomet," vol. iii. p. 57, ed. 1861.

Muhammad.—How can I bear to remain quiet, O Gabriel? How can I see my beloved followers in such a state? I will rend my garment, and not be ashamed thereat. O Gabriel, I pray thee to let me know what is best to be done.

Gabriel.—Hear my statements, O object and desire of all endowed with understanding. If thou intendest to solve this difficulty thou must order Husain to come from Karbalá, for he alone can raise the feet of sinners from the mud of destruction. Should that Noah come and act as pilot of this ship,* I have no doubt it will pass safely through this shoreless ocean.

Muhammad.—Arise, O 'Alí, and beat mournfully on thy head. Let Fátimah, the best among women,† be also informed of the matter. Say to her, Come out of thy grave, for a new flame is kindled. Think of some remedy, seeing that the mourners of thy Husain are burnt, are burnt! O 'Alí, bring with thee the light of my two eyes, bring thy son, who was cut to pieces with the enemy's dagger.

'Alí.—Come out of thy grave, O daughter of the best of all men; behold the Shí'ahs in trouble by the commotion of the Day of Resurrection. Come out soon, in obedience to thy father's command. Come, and render the abode of torture, as it were, the rose-garden of Abraham.‡

Fátimah (*coming out of her sepulchre*).—Why art thou, O 'Alí, moaning, beating on thy head, heaving sighs from thy heart, and setting the heaven in flames? Hast thou heard from anyone something concerning Karbalá? Hast thou again seen my Husain smitten by a dagger? O light of my eyes, if this be not the cause of thy lamentation, tell me, where is my son, where is my Husain, where is he?

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* See Sale's "Koran," ch. vii. p. 122, ed. 1734.

† See note *, p. 42, vol. i.

‡ See note, p. 103, vol. i.

'Alí.—O flower of the garden of modesty, look about for a minute, and observe the commotion. Come, let us go to Karbalá, and, weeping, announce the matter to Husain, for the solution of this problem rests with thy son, who is the saviour of all the Shí'ahs.

Fátimah.—O thou whose son is killed, shed no more tears, but go thou to Karbalá, and bring thy Husain with thee. I hope he will be able to do something for the sinners of our people. Salvation is his privilege; he must, therefore, put matters right.

The Scribe.—O keeper of hell, go on burning these sinners, and drag these drunkards * to the flaming fire.

The Sinners.—O thou mother of Husain, have mercy on us; our hearts are set on fire, save us! We have been all the day weeping for thy Husain, all the night mourning for thy beloved. To-day we have lost the way, be thou pleased to lead us. O mother of Husain, mercifully defend us.

Fátimah.—Since you have been weeping for Husain my son, he will be sure to come forth and help you. Make haste, O Husain, to remedy the pain. Come and behold thy friends in bitter agony. Set thy face towards the throne of the gracious Lord, and, standing at the foot of the same, groan there and rend thy shroud to pieces.

Husain (coming forth with arrows stuck in his body).—Dear mother, may Husain be a ransom for thy voice! what dost thou want thy beloved son to do for thee? Behold what cruelties have been endured by thy Husain. May God grant thee patience, my mother!

Fátimah.—I wish I had not come out from under the earth thus to see thy delicate body. Thou hast, however, performed thy duty, it is now the hour to receive thy re-

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* The more received opinion is, that both drinking wine or other strong liquors in any quantity, and playing at any game of chance, are absolutely forbidden.—Sale's "Koran," chap. ii. p. 25, ed. 1734.

ward. The Day of Resurrection having arrived, it is time for thee to make intercession for sinners. Come in this same condition, with thy afflicted soul and wounded body, and save the followers of thy grandfather from destruction.

Husain (*calling 'Alí Akbar*).*—The Day of Resurrection is at hand! come forth, dear 'Alí Akbar, come forth!

The headless 'Alí Akbar (*coming forth*).—Where art thou sleeping, O afflicted Kásim?† arise.

Kásim (*coming out covered with wounds*).—O 'Abbás,‡ thou lion-like prince, come forth.

'Abbás (*appearing without hands*).—O Zainab,§ my unlucky and miserable sister, come along. This is the commotion of the Day of Resurrection, the hour for which we have longed; this is the scene of which Karbalá was but a foretaste.

'Alí Akbar (*to Husain*).—O father, thou hast opened a door of sorrow on our face. Wilt thou tell us why thou hast called the martyrs to life?

Husain.—O youthful 'Alí Akbar, come, let me press kisses on thy pretty face. May the soul of Husain be a sacrifice for thy cloven head! My son, know thou that the Day of Resurrection has arrived, and God has called all creatures to-day to the court of His justice, that the oppressed ones may state their sad cases before Him, and every man reap what he has sown in his life-time. Now is the time of vengeance, now is the hour of recompense.

'Alí Akbar.—Thou art our chief leader, we are all thy servants. Thou, O father, art our king, and we are thine army. We shall appear before God in the form thou thinkest proper. Give, therefore, orders as it pleaseth thee, O our commander.

Husain.—We must at once begin to complain of injuries,

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* See Scene XVII.
† See Scene XVIII.
‡ See Scene XIX.
§ See Scene XXXIV.

we must make the pillars of God's throne shake and tremble. Call, therefore, all the martyrs that are buried at Karbalá, shout out to the slain whose heads have been cruelly severed from their bodies. Bring with thee Húr, Habíb, Muslim, Awn, and Zahír. Bring also 'Alí, Ja'far, and the excellent Fazl. Bring the sons of Muslim, Wahháb, and my six brothers with thee, and present them to me.*

'Alí Akbar (to the Martyrs).—O poor thirsty ones, whose bodies were torn to pieces by the enemy, rise forth from under the earth, even the whole of you. Come along with me, all of you, with your heads cut off, for to-day will all matters be brought to light and settled. Behold them, O father, all with dissevered heads. O king, see thine army standing in array before thee.

Husain.—To-day shall the crown of my head touch the heavens, for I have a troop of beheaded ones for my army. I am going to meet the Prophet in the plain of judgment, you must all stand in order before me. O my brother 'Abbás, thou whose hands are cut off from the body, let thy mutilated limbs be hanging from thy neck. Bring ye with you the rope with which Shimar tied up my sister Zainab's hands. Bring ye also the chain with which my delicate son 'Abid-dín was bound. Bring my child Asghar whose throat was cut, that I may bear him on my hands when I appear before the Lord.

The Prophet (in his pulpit).—I smell some nice fragrance in the air; tell me, O Gabriel, whence cometh this scent.

Gabriel.—O Prophet, thy grandson is coming from Karbalá. God's special servant is coming to him. Look there and see that wonderful sight, how the King of Karbalá is coming with his troop of martyrs!

Muhammad.—Come, dear Husain, save me from this whirlpool of affliction. Come, O Khizr,† and give the water of life to my thirsty lips. O Husain, thou art honour-

* See Scenes X., XI., and XIV., and note, p. 140, vol. ii.

† See note †, p. 200, vol. i.

able to-day, thou hast an innocent 'Alí Asghar with his throat cut; thou hast an 'Abbás whose hands have been cut off on the bank of the River Euphrates; thou hast 'Alí Akbar, who was wounded with daggers and swords. Come, my child, repair to the plain of resurrection at Karbalá, for it is the time of judgment.

Husain (*at a distance*).—None were ever so ruthlessly killed with the enemy's spiteful dagger like as we were. No Noah's ark foundered in the water like ours. The Joseph of Jacob, though lost, was at last found; my Joseph was separated from us in Karbalá, but never appeared again. Many youths have died disappointed by heaven, but none of them left the world in such distress as we suffered when 'Alí Akbar was taken from us.

The Prophet (*addressing Gabriel*).—O faithful spirit, my wings are all burnt by Husain's sighs. The martyr's sad case has made me forget the Day of Resurrection. Is this the Imám whose body was so riddled by arrows as to appear a mass of feathers like a fowl? Support me, O Gabriel, for my back is broken.

Husain.—Dear grandfather, though I know it is unpleasant to thee, still, as it is the Day of Judgment, I pray thee take vengeance on thy people. O Seal* of the Prophets, I have many grievous complaints against thy people.

The Prophet.—Dear child, I know thy sufferings were many, and indescribable too, still I should like to hear some of them from thine own mouth.

Husain.—For the sake of thy people, I consented that my life should be destroyed. I gave up my son, my brother, and my son-in-law for their sakes. I received many mortal wounds, even one thousand nine hundred and fifty-one wounds. They made my children miserable by their

* See note ‡, p. 40, vol. i.

cruel behaviour towards the little things, and tied my sister's hands with this very rope.

The Prophet.—Tell me, O ill-treated child, what was thy most cruel wound? what is the thing that most affected thee?

Husain.—Know, O thou rose of the garden of the gracious Lord, that on three occasions I was extremely grieved. First, when 'Alí Akbar, my crowned son, rode on thy horse, whilst parched with thirst, and set out for battle. The struggle on that occasion grieved my heart. My soul burned within me when I saw that disappointed youth fall down from the saddle to the ground.

The Prophet.—I am very sorry for thee, my child; tell me, in the second place, what other things pained thee exceedingly.

Husain.—O thou to whom God has been wonderfully gracious, my heart was greatly moved at the time when Zainab my sister was captured by strangers, who were not fit to see her, when all the females of my household were made prisoners. When the veil * was removed from my sister's face, I thought they cut off my head a second time. When my moon-like daughter's face was uncovered, I felt as if some one had pierced me in the side.

The Prophet.—Thou consumest my heart as it were a candle; tell me when thou wast distressed the third time.

Husain.—Dear grandfather, when my children became wanderers, when they were entangled among thorns and brambles, when the feet of 'Abid-dín were pricked and torn, my hands lost their power, and my heart fainted within me. Sukainah, because of her frequent calling on me, and because she would cry and weep for her beloved father, was separated by the troops from Zainab, and led into a dreary wilderness.

Muhammad.—Oh! what troubles thou must have under-

* See note *, p. 121, vol. i.

gone, O Husain! who is able to hear such a sad story? Martyrdom is indeed thy crown; trials bring thee near to God and establish a close union between Him and thee. Think not about thy former trials, and forget the son of Ziyád's* injury to thee. Let the tree of intercession bear fruit, and bestir thyself now on behalf of the sinners amongst my people.

Husain.—O Creator and Maker of this world, I adjure Thee, by the time when the enemy threw me down from my horse, by the time when Zainab besought Shimar for mercy, though he did not allow her to close my eyes, nor permitted her to weep for me, forgive Thou graciously the evil conduct of those people, and be pleased to pardon their iniquity.

Gabriel (*bringing the key of Paradise and delivering it to the Prophet*).—Peace be unto thee, O Muhammad, thou elect of God, the merciful Lord has sent thee greetings, saying, "Heave not such burning sighs from thy breast. He who has seen most trials, endured most afflictions, and been most patient in his sufferings, the same shall win the privilege of intercession. He shall raise the standard of intercession in the Day of Judgment who hath voluntarily put his head under the sword of trial, ready to have it cloven in two like the point of a pen. Take thou this key of intercession from me, and give it to him who has undergone the greatest trials."

Muhammad.—My brother, thou faithful servant of the living God, tell me, what means this? Declare unto me the secret of this story, and let me know what mystery is included in this thing, O thou trusted of the Lord.

Gabriel.—May I be a ransom for thee! it being the time of revelation, the epoch when God's mystery of creation is to be revealed, there is some secret in this proposal which God wishes all His creatures, the children of men, should

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* See note *, p. 177, vol. i.

know. It is to be shown who is the man who has offered up his life on behalf of God, and, while in the world, performed his covenant with his Maker; who it is that has suffered more trials than others, not having withheld his family but altogether given them up as a ransom. It is, I say, to be revealed who has thus endured unknown pains and anguish, that God may to-day fill his lap with excellent rewards.

The Prophet.—O Gabriel, lighten my heart for a minute, and ease it of its burden; gather all the prophets and saints around me quickly. Gather them, that they may advocate their claims; let them, one by one, come to me and explain their circumstances.

Gabriel.—O ye blessed prophets, ye perplexed amongst yourselves, ye distracted with dread of the Day of Resurrection, if you have a mind to enter the lofty Paradise, hasten ye and come to Muhammad your chief.

Abraham, God's friend.—O my lord Muhammad, make some sort of intercession for men, for they are all disturbed in their minds by the horrors of the Day of Judgment. Thou, being the recipient of God's mercy, must have compassion on the Almighty's creatures, and manage to save them.

Muhammad.—Behold, O ye prophets, let me give you notice that Gabriel hath brought me a message from God that I must give the key of intercession to one who has endured many afflictions in the world. Now, therefore, disclose to me your painful trials, and give me a full detail of your anguish and misery, that it may be manifested to all which of you hath been the greatest sufferer.

Jacob.—O Prophet, I suffered so many trials, that the light of my eyes failed me. I was much troubled when Joseph was taken away from me; it was indeed a great grief to me to allow my moon-faced* Joseph to be thrown into the bottom of the pit for God's sake.

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* See note, p. 7, vol. i.

Husain.—O Jacob, though thy Joseph was prettier than the moon, yet he could not be handsomer than 'Alí Akbar my son. Although thine eyes were at first made blind on account of Joseph's being separated from thee, yet at last thou didst receive thy sight when thou didst again behold him. But as for me, I wish I had become blind ere I had seen Akbar's stature fall to the ground before my eyes in Karbalá.

Jacob.—O Husain, it appears thou dost not know what injuries Joseph sustained from his brethren on his way to Egypt. Judah, the father of the Jews, gave so many slaps on Joseph's moon-like face, that it became altogether blue like the leaves of the water-lily. They cruelly besmeared his head and hair with blood. Oh, who could be so cruel as to injure such a lovely creature!

Husain.—Let me go and bring 'Alí Akbar, my noble son, that thou mayest see what *my* dear child hath suffered. If thy Joseph was smitten by his brethren, that did not kill him; thy beloved son did not in thy sight give up the ghost, parched with thirst. O my noble 'Alí Akbar, thou who wast deprived of life in thy youth, come. O my tender plant, cruelly stript of leaves and fruits, show thyself.

Fátimah (bringing 'Alí Akbar's body).—My noble 'Alí Akbar, my child, my child! my despairing martyr, my son, my son! What shall Shahrbánú* thy mother do after thy death, dear son?

Husain.—Never did the malicious party thus oppress thy Joseph; when did they cut thy beloved into a thousand pieces? None within the regions of earth has ever witnessed such atrocity. O God, Thou alone art aware of Husain's condition; one desire has remained in my heart even until this Day of Resurrection, namely, to see 'Alí

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* See note, p. 70.

Akbar's marriage and behold him sitting in the wedding chamber.*

Jacob.—Was not my Joseph cruelly put in prison? was he not carried as a slave to be sold in Egypt? Did not his brethren strike him on the face, to the disfigurement of his ruddy countenance? Did they not hurt his soul by their tyranny? Did they not tie his hands behind him?

Husain.—Though thy Joseph's rosy face was made pale by buffeting, yet his body did not receive wounds of arrows and spears. Granting that Joseph passed his time in a foreign country, yet he did not wear a shroud in lieu of wedding garments.

Jacob.—O Husain, thy speech doth increase my anguish and sorrow; behold what cruelties were done to my son! His brethren put a rope around his neck, and cruelly and despitefully stripped him of his clothes. After much ignominy and shame, they cast him into a well, without any fault or offence on his part.

Husain.—Thou mightest have heard Joseph's story from somebody, but I am sure thou didst not see him cast in the well. As for Akbar, he was martyred in my presence, but none cut Joseph's head off before thine eyes. Akbar received strokes of spears and daggers in my sight, but thy beloved did not give up the ghost before thy face.

Muhammad.—O Husain, let not the world be consumed with grief, speak no more of Akbar, and make not the hearts of men bleed; thy words have rekindled my quenched fire, they have made me burn from head to foot. My troubles were already many, but thy words have laid an additional burden on my soul. Tell me, what were 'Alí Akbar's last words when he was dying?

Imám Husain.—O grandfather, when my son's elegant body fell down never to rise again, I went and kissed him most affectionately, saying to him, "O walking cypress-tree,†

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* See note †, p. 77.

† See note, p. 10, vol. i.

O my sugar-eating parrot, I am Husain thy father; if thou hast anything to tell me, say on." He replied, "Father, I am exhausted by reason of the thrusts of spears and daggers which I have received; think of some water for me, for I am thirsty." I told him I was also in distress for want of something to drink. I was sorry I could not do anything for him. He died in the beginning of his life on my lap, raving with thirst and in anguish.

Muhammad.—Alas, alas! what things have befallen thee at the hand of my people! May my soul be a ransom for thy Akbar! Oh! I wonder how thou didst give up 'Alí Akbar; how couldst thou bear to see him beheaded?

Husain.—I cast myself in these trials at the foot of God's mercy, and made 'Alí Akbar a ransom for thy followers. If Akbar's body, O grandfather, was cut to pieces with daggers, that is nothing, since thy people's salvation is concerned.

Gabriel.—Peace be unto thee, O Muhammad the elect, God hath sent thee a message, saying, "None has suffered the pain and afflictions which Husain has undergone. None has, like him, been obedient in my service. As he has taken no steps save in sincerity in all that he has done, thou must put the key of Paradise in his hand. The privilege of making intercession for sinners is exclusively his. Husain is, by My peculiar grace, the mediator for all."

Muhammad.—Good tidings, O Husain! act thou according to thy will. Behold the fulfilment of God's promise. Permission has proceeded from the Judge, the gracious Creator, that I should give to thy hand this key of intercession. Go thou and deliver from the flames every one who has in his life-time shed but a single tear for thee, every one who has in any way helped thee, every one who has performed a pilgrimage to thy shrine, or mourned for thee, and every one who has written tragic verses for thee. Bear each and all with thee to Paradise.

Husain.—O my friends, be ye relieved from grief, and

come along with me to the mansions of the blest. Sorrow has passed away, it is now time for joy and rest; trouble has gone by, it is the hour to be at ease and tranquillity.

The Sinners (*entering Paradise*).—God be praised! by Husain's grace we are made happy, and by his favour we are delivered from destruction. By Husain's loving-kindness is our path decked with roses and flowers. We were thorns and thistles, but are now made cedars owing to his merciful intercession.

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